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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

THE ACT—We are in a Las Vegas night club, watching a gifted performer do a series of star turns. The performer is played by Liza Minnelli and she *is* gifted, but who would want to be in Vegas? (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

AFRICAN INTERLUDE—A play by Martie Evans-Charles. *Opens Thursday, March 2, and will* run through Sunday, March 12. (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 466 Grand St. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Free.)

BRONTOSAURUS and **CABIN 12**—A pair of one-acters, the first by Lanford Wilson, the second by John Bishop. Opens Saturday, March 4, at 7, and will run through Saturday, April 1. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special performance Sunday, March 5, at 7.)

CHAPTER TWO—A new comedy by Neil Simon, *less funny than most of its predecessors.* Judd Hirsch plays a miserable widower who suddenly finds a new love and doesn't know what to do with her, except to marry her and make her as miserable as he has been. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-2412. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

COLD STORAGE—Ronald Ribman's curiously divided play—the first act seems to have very little to do with the second—is an occasion for some admirable acting by Martin Balsam and Len Cariou. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. JU 2-3897. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS—A play by Sam Shepard. Preview Wednesday, March 1. Opens officially on Thursday, March 2. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

DEATHTRAP—John Wood heads the cast in a thriller by Ira Levin. Directed by Robert Moore. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

DRACULA—Frank Langella co-stars with Edward Gorey's sets and costumes in this highly entertaining revival of a twenties melodrama. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE GIN GAME—Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn as occupants of an old people's home, each fiercely determined to have his way. A grim but often very funny play by D. L. Coburn. The director is Mike Nichols. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 246-6742. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

HELLO, DOLLY!—Carol Channing and Eddie Bracken in a revival of the Jerry Herman-Michael Stewart musical. Directed by Lucia Victor. Previews Wednesday evening through Saturday, March 1-4. Opens officially with a special performance for the Actors' Fund on *Sunday, March 5.* (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 586-5555. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Thursday, March 2, at 2.)

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A LIFE IN THE THEATRE—David Mamet's loving tribute to the theatre in the form of a collage of the offstage conversations between a seasoned actor and a younger one, and of their onstage dialogues in brief parodies of every conceivable kind of scene. The play is very funny and subtly haunting as well. With Ellis Rabb and Peter Evans as the actors. Gerald Gutierrez was the estimable director, and John Lee Beatty the estimable scenic designer. (Theatre de Lys, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

THE MANDRAKE—Wilford Leach has worked up a stunning production of the rowdy old comedy by Niccolò Machiavelli. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

MUSEUM—Tina Howe's delightful, episodic comedy takes place at an exhibit of modernist American art, and the action is entirely a matter of the responses of the viewers to the invisible paintings and visible artifacts. The performance of the young, refreshing company, under Max Stafford-Clark's direction, is all that any playwright could wish for. Admirable set, costumes, and lighting by Robert Yodice, Patricia McGourty, and Jennifer Tipton, respectively. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

MY ASTONISHING SELF—Selections from the writings of Bernard Shaw, as delivered in character by Donal Donnelly. Mr. Donnelly, a capable actor, is only an indifferent impersonator, but G.B.S. is, as always, good company. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 5.)

NEGRO ENSEMBLE COMPANY—Two plays by Gus Edwards, directed by Douglas Turner Ward, alternating weekly—**BLACK BODY BLUES** is a melodrama—unfortunately, a rather empty one—about a gentle black man, the prostitute he lives with, and his dangerous, criminal brother. With Samm-Art Williams in the leading role. Through Sunday, March 5. . . . **THE OFFERING**: An old man, who years ago moved out of Harlem to the West Side; a younger man, once an apprentice of his and now a professional killer; the wife of the first; and the white girl friend of the second—these are the characters in Mr. Edwards' taut, often threatening (and sometimes funny) drama of sexual urgency and rivalry. The play is fascinating, and the acting, by Mr. Ward, Charles Weldon, Olivia Williams, and Katherine Knowles, is entirely worthy of it. Tuesday through Sunday, March 7-12. (St. Marks Playhouse, 133 Sec-

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DRAWINGS: *Douglas Florian, J. B. Handelsman, Stan Hunt, James Mulligan, William Hamilton, Jack Ziegler, Mischa Richter, Warren Miller, Ed Fisher, Henry Martin, James Stevenson, Arnie Levin, Dean Vietor, Al Ross, Lee Lorenz, Charles Barsotti, Robert Weber, Edward Frascino*

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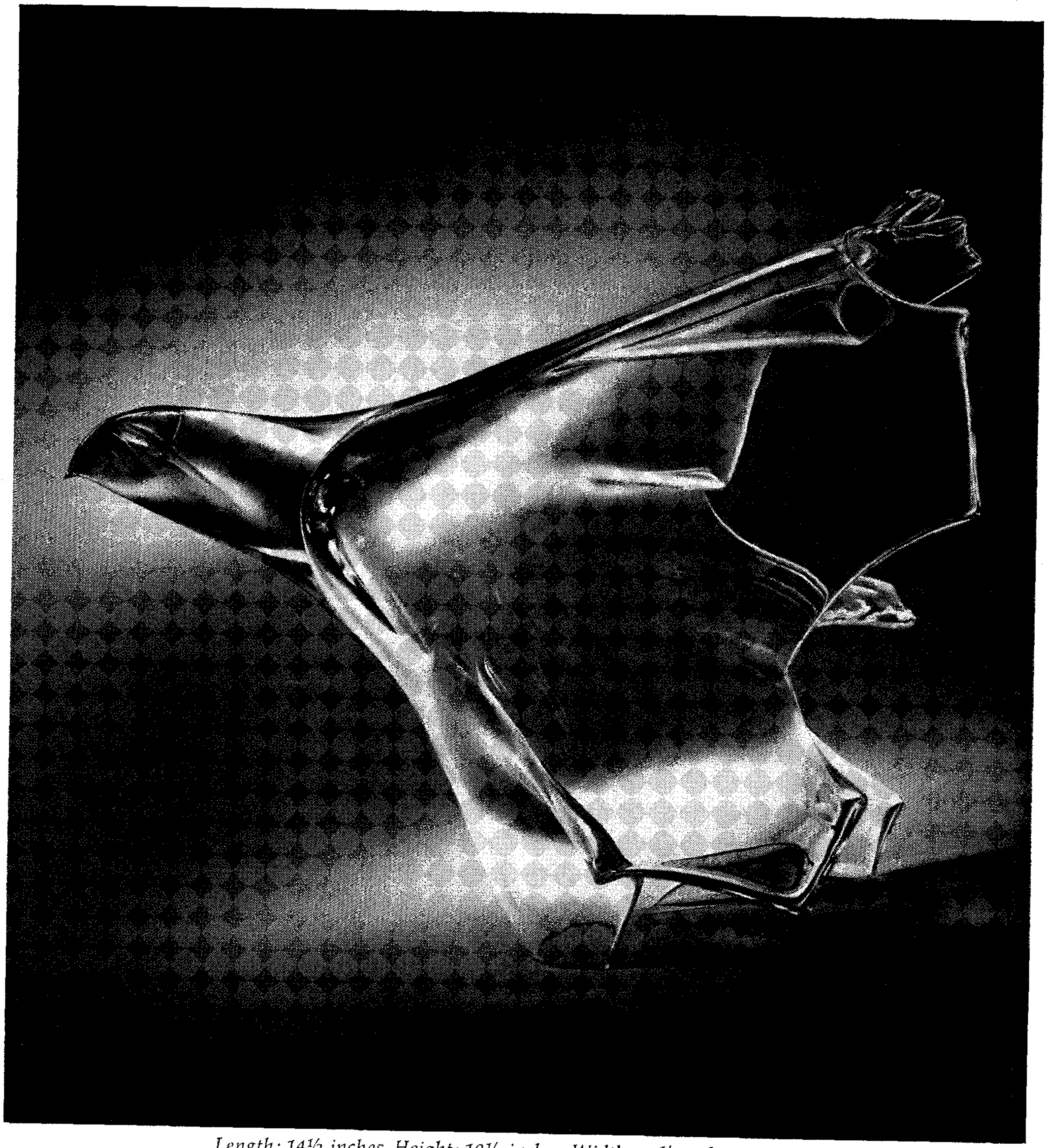

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ond Ave., at St. Marks Pl. OR 4-3530. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3:30 and Sundays at 2:30.

On the Twentieth Century—A musical comedy (book and lyrics by Comden and Green, music by Cy Coleman) based on the old Hecht-MacArthur play "Twentieth Century" and showing its age. John Cullum and Madeline Kahn are its stars. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Othello—Earle Hyman gives a performance of great distinction as the Moor, but there is almost no one to catch his fire in this pedestrian production. With Carmen de Lavallade as Emilia, and Nicholas Kepros as Iago. (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 924-7160. Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays at 11 A.M.; Wednesdays at 2:30; Fridays at 8; and Saturdays at 2 and 8.)

The Passion of Dracula—Christopher Bernau makes an effective, menacing Count, and Giulia Pagano is good, too, as the object of his predatory affections in this unpretentious, entertaining adaptation (in the British manner) of Bram Stoker's old thriller. Bob Hall and David Richmond are the adapters. Peter Bennett is the commendable director. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Play's the Thing—A revival of Ferenc Molnar's 1926 comedy, in P. G. Wodehouse's adaptation. With René Auberjonois, Stephen Collins, Kurt Kasznar, Austin Pendleton, George Rose, Rex Robbins, and Carole Shelley. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes with a matinée on Sunday, March 19.)

A Prayer for My Daughter—The events of this evocative, fascinating play, by Thomas Babe, take place at a police station on the night when a homosexual guru and his junkie disciple are pulled in for a murder, and when the daughter of the sergeant in charge threatens suicide. The atmosphere of the precinct house at a time of emotional crisis is as convincing and pervasive as that of the rock scene in Mr. Babe's "Kid Champion," and the acting, under Robert Allan Ackerman's direction, is exceptionally good. The actors are Jeffrey De Munn, Alan Rosenberg, Stephen Keep, and George Dzundza. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act and Scenes from Soweto—A pair of one-acters. "Statements," the most recent of Athol Fugard's strong, affecting plays dealing with the inhuman racial predicament in present-day South Africa, is about the clandestine (and illegal) love affair of a "colored" school principal and a white librarian, and it is very well acted by Robert Christian and Veronica Castang. "Scenes," by Steve Wilmer, which suffers somewhat by comparison, tells of a black South African who returns to Johannesburg from Oxford, is caught up in the racial riots and eventually murdered by the police. Again, Mr. Christian is splendid as the hero, and John Vennema does as well as possible playing the white men in his life, all of them setups. Direction by Thomas Bullard. (Manhattan Theatre Club, 321 E. 73rd St. 472-0600. Wednesdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Timbuktu!—An all-black musical, based on the 1953 musical "Kismet" and starring Eartha Kitt, Melba Moore, Gilbert Price, and Ira Hawkins. Luther Davis wrote the book and Robert Wright and George Forrest the music and lyrics. Geoffrey Holder directed. Preview Wednesday matinée, March 1. Opens officially on Wednesday, March 1, at 6:45. (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Touch of the Poet—O'Neill's radically imperfect play—one of a sequence that he abandoned—is being bravely dealt with by Jason Robards, Geraldine Fitzgerald, and Milo O'Shea. The director is José Quintero. (Helen Hayes, 210 W. 46th St. 246-6380. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

GALLERY
LASZLO

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Long Runs—**Annie:** A long musical based on the celebrated comic-strip characters Little Orphan Annie and Daddy Warbucks. Dorothy Loudon is marvellous as an alcoholic scold. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **A Chorus Line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. A brilliant, innovative musical, conceived, choreographed, and directed by Michael Bennett. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **The Club:** Eve Merriam's musical entertainment is set in a gentlemen's club in 1903, but the company consists of seven women, lightly disguised in top hats, white tie, and tails, who sing and dance to authentic, indelicate songs of the period. As feminist projects go, this one is unusually good-humored, and the singing, and especially the dancing, under Tommy Tune's direction, is proficient and pleasing. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **The Fantasticks:** 7,416 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide:** The marvellous poems and prose of an American writer, Ntozake Shange, are spoken and danced to by seven remarkably gifted young black women. The director, Oz Scott, must be given high credit for the captivating result. Choreography by Paula Moss. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 246-5969. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **Gemini:** In Albert Innaurato's delightful comedy, a Harvard undergraduate, son of an Italian-American laborer, is paid a surprise visit by a pair of his classmates—a well-to-do brother and sister from Cambridge—and is thrown into a panic that at first appears to be social, but is actually sexual. With Danny Aiello as the father and Jonathan Hadary, among other good actors. Peter Mark Schifter directed. (Little Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. 221-6425. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **Grease:** A musical (score, book, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey) that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I Love My Wife:** Some singable songs by Cy Coleman and Michael Stewart, and an admirable cast, but nothing much can be done with Mr. Stewart's tasteless book. Gene Saks is the brave director. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 246-0390. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **The King and I:** An irresistibly tuneful Rodgers and Hammerstein show, all the more pleasing for being somewhat old-fashioned. Yul Brynner is its superb star. (Uris, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **The Magic Show:** A wretched musical, but the magic tricks make up for it all. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 489-6392. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **Mummenschanz:** A merry evening of pantomime with three masked players. The masks are ingenious and surprising and so are the ideas of this nimble troupe. (Bijou, 209 W. 45th St. 221-8500. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Oh! Calcutta!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **Same Time, Next Year:** A slick and sentimental comedy about happy marriages and a single twenty-five-year-long, happy adultery, practiced annually. With Betsy Palmer and Monte Markham. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays and Thursdays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Side by Side by Sondheim:** An evening of delectable songs by the cleverest (and sometimes the most touching) of contemporary popular composers. The performers are Nancy Dussault, Carol Swarbrick, Burr Tillstrom (with Kukla and Ollie), and Jack Blackton. (Morosco, 217 W. 45th St. 246-6230. Nightly, except Sundays and Tuesdays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **Vanities:** In three acts, three Southern high-school girl cheerleaders change from all but identical "best friends" (1963) into quite different and incompatible New Yorkers (1974), in this amusing and gently ironic comedy by Jack Heifner. Garland Wright directed the attractive performance. (Downstairs at the Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **The Wiz:** An elaborate and mostly successful version of "The Wizard of Oz," with an all-black cast of great talent. Directed by Geoffrey Holder, who also did the costumes. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. CI 7-7260. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

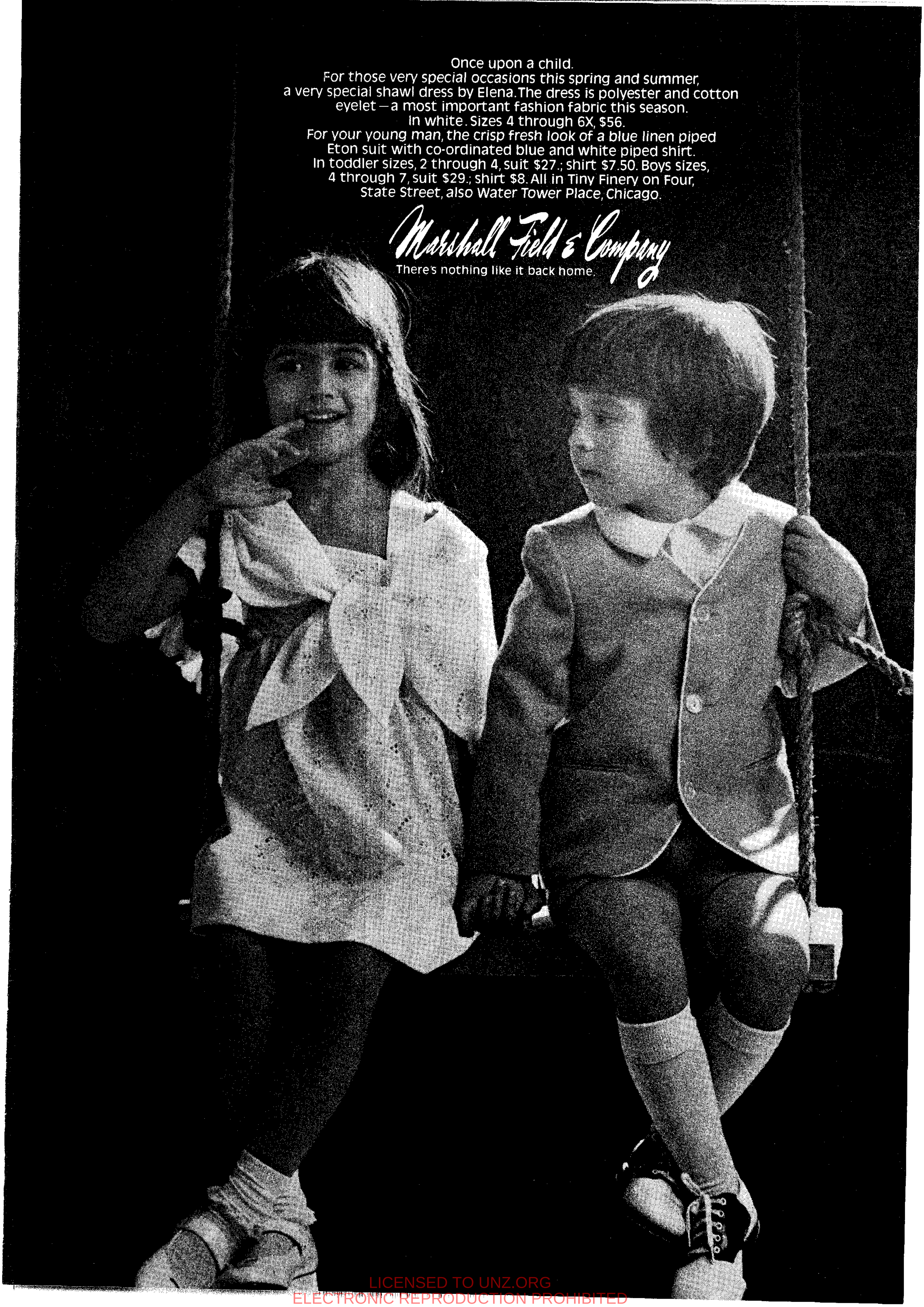
Beatlemania—A multimedia and live-music program about the sixties, with four musicians doing thirty-seven songs written by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Wednesdays through Fridays at 7, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.)

DANCE

Dance Umbrella—A five-week season by nine contemporary dance companies which will end Sunday, March 19. **Ze'eva Cohen Solo Dance Repertory:** Wednesday evening, March 1; Saturday evening, March 4; and Sunday matinée, March 5. . . . **Viola Farber Dance Company:** Thursday and Friday evenings, March 2-3; Saturday matinée, March 4; and Sunday evening, March 5. . . . **Laura Dean Dancers and Musicians:** Tuesday evening, March 7; Thursday evening, March 9; Saturday evening, March 11; and Sunday matinée, March 12. . . . **Elizabeth Keen Dance Company:** Wednesday evening, March 8; Friday evening, March 10; Saturday matinée, March 11; and Sunday evening, March 12. (Entermedia, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St. 475-4191. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

Katherine Litz—With her dance company, in a full-length work, "The Car That Went with Motor 88 Miles." (Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Sq. S. Thursday through Saturday, March 2-4, at 8. For tickets, call 777-0033, between 1 and 3.)

Murray Louis Dance Company—Opening per-



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formances of an eight-day engagement that will run through Sunday, March 19—Thursday, March 9, at 7:30, and Friday, March 10, at 8: "Schubert" (New York première), "Déjà Vu," and "Glances." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 11, at 8, and Sunday, March 12, at 2:30: "Hoopla," "Geometrics," and "Porcelain Dialogues." (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

•

"Ain't Misbehavin'" (Manhattan Theatre Club Cabaret, 321 E. 73rd St. 472-0600. Wednesday and Thursday, March 1-2, at eight-fifteen; Friday and Saturday, March 3-4, at eight-fifteen and ten-thirty; and Sunday, March 5, at eight-fifteen. Admission by ticket only.)—Fats Waller was a classic tunesmith. He wrote his songs between drinks; while the show's leading singer waited; in cabs on his way to the Brill Building; and before breakfast in the early P.M. They share certain trademarks—simple, ready-to-wear melodies based largely on imitation (most phrases partially repeat the previous one), built-in, highly compelling rhythms, and unique comic atmospheres. Waller's songs were often direct extensions of his performing, which was ribald, sardonic, and nonsensical. The recent Fats Waller show at Michael's Pub was a celebration of the little, jumping band the Master had through much of the thirties, but "Ain't Misbehavin'," the new show here, is far more ambitious and subtle, for it is an attempt to define the inseparable essences of Waller the songwriter and Waller the performer. The show was the idea of Murray Horwitz and Richard Maltby, Jr., who directed, and they have assembled almost thirty songs (seventeen by Waller, plus several that he probably wrote but sold to others) and a cast of five (**Irene Cara, Nell Carter, Andre De Shields, Armelia McQueen, Ken Page**), which flawlessly sings, dances, mimes, whoops, grimaces, and, in effect, makes Waller and his shining, champing works three-dimensional. Their very faces are right and of the period, and the lyrics are generously salted with Waller's famous mock-British asides: "Mercy, mercy, mercy!" and "One never knows, do one?" It is an almost perfect evening (two or three redundant songs could be cut in the second act, which is too long), and high praise should also go to Arthur Faria, who did the liquid choreography; to Luther Henderson, who supervised the music and plays effortless stride piano; and to William Elliott and Jeffrey Gutcheon, who did many of the vocal arrangements. Tickets, unfortunately, are hard to come by.

•

Ali's Alley, 77 Greene St., between Spring and Broome Sts. (226-9042)—Many of the best contemporary post-hard-bop, new-jazz, and, sometimes, veteran bebopping musicians are booked into these quarters by its sympathetic proprietor, drummer Rashied Ali. Tenor saxophonist Joe Rigby is here with his quintet, Dynasty, through Saturday, March 4; bassist **Stafford James** will bring in his combo on Tuesday, March 7. Music from about ten. Closed Sundays.

Ballroom, 458 West Broadway, between Houston and Prince Sts. (673-9121)—A long, narrow, very white room—white walls, white tables, and white chairs—with a self-conscious portrait of the club interior hanging near the stage. The current attraction is "By Strouse," a mini revue produced and presided over by the composer Charles Strouse—he scored "Annie," "Applause," and "Bye Bye Birdie." Donna Marshall, Gary Beach, Maureen Moore, and Gail Nelson sing Mr. Strouse's tunes. Shows Tuesdays through Sundays at eight-thirty and ten-thirty. Dinner.

Bar None, 167 E. 33rd St. (684-3223)—Sort of thirties chophouse. The pianist **Dardanelle** is on hand from seven, Tuesdays through Saturdays. Her playing is genteel Tatum, but her singing is pure, effortless, and delightful.

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Beefsteak Charlie's, 55 Fifth Ave., at 12th St. (675-4720)—This enlightened branch of a thirty-eight-part restaurant chain brings in a variety of jazz players to perform in its cocktail lounge. Janet Lawson, a young bebop revivalist, will sing with a quintet through Saturday, March 4. Wednesday through Saturday, March 8-11, pianist **Kenny Barron,** bassist **Buster Williams,** and drummer **Ben Riley** will perform. Music from nine until two Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from ten on Fridays and Saturdays. Dinner.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Here's the lineup: Wednesday, March 1, is given over to a jazz and rhythm-and-blues outfit that features drummer Lenny White; rock singer Jay Ferguson will visit on Thursday and Friday, March 2-3; Sunday, March 5, has been reserved for rock singer-composer Warren Zevon; Monday and Tuesday, March 6-7, Hawkwind, a British rock combo, will be present; NRBQ, a New England R. & B. band, will play opposite Redbone, an American Indian rock quartet, on Wednesday and Thursday, March 8-9; and Friday and Saturday, March 10-11, **Lou Reed,** the former lead singer and composer for the now defunct Velvet Underground and the father of punk rock, will be here with his backup band. Shows at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and at nine and midnight Fridays and Saturdays. Dinner.

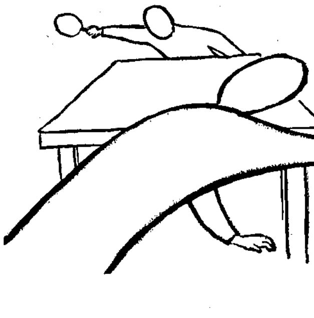
Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A seemingly inexhaustible supply of devoted patrons and a new grand piano. **Dick Katz** and his bassist play through Saturday, March 4. The Sunday chores are handled by **Jimmy Rowles.** From ten most nights; from nine-thirty on Sundays. Dinner.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (RH 4-1600)—In the Café Carlyle, **George Shearing,** the piano stylist and, lately, a breathy vocalist, too, is filling in during Bobby Short's midwinter leave of absence. "Lullaby of Birdland" and other numbers Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-forty-five and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one. Singer-pianist Michael Carney appears Mondays after nine-thirty. Dinner and supper. . . . **Teddy Wilson,** who is always elegant, understated, and swinging, presides over the keyboard in the Bemelmans Bar weeknights, from nine-thirty to one.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—This bar has for a couple of years distinguished itself by presenting some of the most bizarre, if not always musically accomplished, rock and punk-rock bands around. Music most nights from nine-thirty. Monday is showcase night.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (OR 4-4450)—**Alberta Hunter,** a rocking, funny, full-voiced blues singer, songwriter, and legend (she's eighty-two), has returned with pianist Gerald Cook and bassist Al Hall, and she's still delighting her audiences weeknights from eight to one. Blues pianist **Sammy Price** performs on Sundays. Dining.

Crawdaddy, Vanderbilt Ave. at 45th St. (687-1860)—This room flanks 45th Street and has ceiling fans, a tile floor, high-backed Windsor chairs, and food with a New Orleans tinge. **Buck Clayton,** one of the stars of the Count Basie band in the thirties and forties, is starring here with a trio Mondays through Fridays from six-thirty until eleven-thirty.



Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—Bobby Gordon, Vic Dickenson, Jim Andrews, Connie Kay, Ed Polcer, and Red Balaban (who owns the place) are the traditionalists who usually make up the house band. On Tuesday, March 7, trumpeter **Warren Vaché** will join the others. On Sunday, March 5, guitarist Chris Flory will lead a quintet. Mondays through Saturdays from nine-thirty; Sundays from eight-thirty. Dinner.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—An attractive haunt, short on space but not on music. Mondays from ten to three, **Al Haig, Jamil Nasser,** and **Eddie Diehl** perform piano-bass-guitar bebop variations; on Tuesdays, from ten to three, guitarist **Chuck Wayne** leads a trio. Wednesdays through Saturdays, pianist **Hod O'Brien** usually holds down the fort with **Frank Luther** on bass, **Joe Puma** on guitar, and vocalist Alicia Sherman. This foursome works from ten to three; on Sundays, they put in a walloping eight-hour session, from seven to three. Weeknights from seven to ten, pianist and trumpeter Gene Roland, guitarist Jim Watkins, and bassist Morris Edwards get together on the tiny bandstand.

Hopper's, 452 Sixth Ave., at 11th St. (260-0250)—Brazilian guitarist Laurindo Almeida will be leading a jazz trio through Saturday, March 4. On Monday, March 6, electric violinist **Michal Urbaniak** will show up with a threesome. Mondays through Thursdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty, Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one, and no music Sundays.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (664-9700)—**Roy Eldridge** is buoyed by the resident blowers—pianist Johnny Morris, drummer Eddie Locke, clarinettist Joe Muranyi, bassist Ted Sturgis, and trombonist Bobby Pratt. On Mondays, Max Kaminsky leads the group. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

Larson's, 1160 Third Ave., at 68th St. (744-2540)—**Brooks Kerr,** the young stride pianist and Ellington admirer, has moved into these quarters along with his fatherly associates: bassist **Aaron Bell** and drummer **Shelton Gary.** Kerr and company perform Thursdays through Saturdays; Kerr, Bell, and longtime Ellington drummer **Sonny Greer** are here Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Music and lots of wisecracks from nine to one. Dinner and supper.

Manhattan Theatre Club Cabaret, 321 E. 73rd St. (472-0600)—"Ain't Misbehavin'" (see above) will be presented Wednesday and Thursday, March 1-2, at eight-fifteen; Friday and Saturday, March 3-4, at eight-fifteen and ten-thirty; and Sunday, March 5, at eight-fifteen. Admission by ticket only.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Cornettist **Dick Sudhalter** is guiding a sextet through an Irving Berlin tribute from nine-fifteen. His aides are Michael Renzi on piano, Eddie Barefield on tenor sax, Frank Tate on bass, Don Reid on drums, Johnny Mince on clarinet, and vocalist Ann Phillips. On Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen comes and goes, talking of Lorenzo Tio. Dinner and supper. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A crowded and animated upper West Side music bar that draws rhythm-and-blues, jazz-rock, disco-funk, and, sometimes, jazz bands. Music from ten until three. Dinner.

Other End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—Thursday through Saturday, March 2-4, guitarist **Kenny Burrell** will work with a combo; Monday and Tuesday, March 6-7, will be turned over to Canadian guitarist-folksinger Bruce Cockburn; and Wednesday through Saturday, March 8-11, Bob Neuwirth will lead a rock band. Music most nights at nine and eleven-thirty; on Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Snacks.

Peter Brown, 168 W. 96th St. (866-4710)—Thursday through Saturday, March 2-4, will be turned over to singer Harold Dumont and his band; flutist Sherry Winston and her combo will be present Thursday through Saturday, March 9-11. Music from ten. Dinner.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-9090)—Lots of tourists, a few sagacious natives, and a dance band populate this room with an indoor and an outdoor view. Lester

As a woman, developing and maintaining your beauty requires time, commitment and discipline. And that's especially true when it comes to the care of your skin. Understanding its complex nature and how to deal with it are basic to keeping it clean, healthy looking and beautiful. No magical cream or secret potion can produce the results you get from daily skin care with the right mix of scientifically formulated preparations.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Lanin and his orchestra play Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one; Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two; and Sundays from six to midnight. Dinner.

Reno Sweeney, 126 W. 13th St. (691-0900)—Country-chic singer and pianist Ronee Blakley will be on the stage through Sunday, March 5. Sarah Dash, one-third of the vocal trio Labelle, will begin a one-week visit on Tuesday, March 7. Shows at nine and midnight. Dinner.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Alto saxophonist **LEE KONITZ** and trombonist **JIMMY KNEPPER** and their quintet will be on hand through Saturday, March 4. Free-form drummer **ANDREW CYRILLE** will bring in his quartet on Sunday and Monday, March 5-6. Beginning Tuesday, March 7, guitarist **JOHN ABERCROMBIE** will direct a foursome. Music from about nine-thirty. Dinner.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Downstairs: Saturday, March 4, has been set aside for pianist **MC COY TYNER**'s sextet. Friday and Saturday, March 10-11, soul-disco-jazz tenor saxophonist Stanley Turrentine will play with his quartet. Music from ten. On Mondays, at eight-thirty, a jazz-rock organization called Turning Point takes charge. Upstairs: Bob January guides a fifteen-piece dance band on Sundays from seven to eleven. In the terrace bar, harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN,** guitarist **EDDIE BERG,** and bassist **LISLE ATKINSON** perform on Thursdays from ten to midnight.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (989-9011)—South African pianist **DOLLAR BRAND** heads a quartet through Sunday, March 5; on Tuesday, March 7, trumpeter **WOODY SHAW** will arrive with his band. The Monday-night institution within an institution, the **THAD JONES-MEL LEWIS** band, is alive, well, and fortunately, home between tours. Music from ten.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (924-9723)—The soul-food craze is still going strong in this popular, out-of-the-way bar and restaurant. Mondays through Wednesdays, Sonelius Smith is at the piano; Thursdays through Sundays are turned over to Armen Donelian. Music from eight to two.

West End Café, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The Franc Williams Swing Four perform Wednesday through Sunday, March 1-5, and Tuesday and Wednesday, March 7-8. On Thursday, March 9, the No Gap Generation Jazz Band will plow through some oldies; and the **COUNTSMEN—DICKY WELLS, EARLE WARREN, DILL JONES, FRANKLIN SKEETE,** and **JO JONES, JR.**—will come in for two weeks on Friday, March 10. Music from nine to one-thirty, every night but Monday, March 6, when Dave Chertok will show some films of jazz musicians, starting at eight. Student food at student prices.

W.P.A., 152 Spring St., near West Broadway. (226-3444)—Music in a thirties-chic bar area the size of a kitchenette. Patrons sit atop stool-high banquettes with the room-dominating baby grand practically in their laps. **HAROLD DANKO,** the pianist and lively soloist in the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis band, works with a bassist Tuesdays through Saturdays. **JILL MCMANUS,** an animated Wynton Kelly-inspired pianist, plays on Sundays. Music from nine. Dinner.

DISCOTHÈQUES

Ipanema, 240 W. 52nd St. (765-8025)—A Plexiglas dance floor over colored lights. Live Latin music on Tuesdays from six; recorded disco music from nine on Fridays and Saturdays, and recorded disco and Brazilian music from nine on Sundays. Closed Mondays and Wednesdays.

New York, New York, 33 W. 52nd St. (245-2400)—A lighting man and a licensed laser officer are in charge of the special effects: laser beams projected onto a screen; moving, spinning colored spotlights; and a fog machine. From ten nightly.

Régine's, 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (826-0990)—An Art Deco interior carried out in tones of aubergine and silver. Dancing from ten-thirty. Dinner. Closed Sundays.

Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (489-7667)—This place was built in 1927 as the Fortune Opera House; now it accommodates large numbers of dancers. From ten. Closed Mondays. (Many private parties are held here; therefore, the nights on which the facilities are open to the public may vary.)

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JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Interludes—A varied series of hour-long performances at Town Hall (JU 2-4536)—Wednesday, March 1, at 5:45: **DANCERS.**... ¶ Wednesday, March 8, at 5:45: **JACK GILFORD.**

Carmel Quinn—Carnegie Hall. CI 7-7459. Thursday, March 2, at 8.

Bob Weir Band and **Doucette**—Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. Friday, March 3, at 8 and at midnight. For information about tickets, call 977-9020.

Sha Na Na, Jay Black & the Americans, the Four Tops, and **Tommy James and the Shondells**—Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Friday, March 3, at 8.

Lyrics and Lyricists—The third in a series of four programs in which composers (in this case Charles Strouse) discuss their collaboration with various lyricists, sometimes with the assistance of their professional performing friends. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Sunday and Monday, March 5-6, at 8.

Jazz Legends on Film—Performances by, among others, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Fats Waller, Bessie Smith, John Coltrane, Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, and Roy Eldridge. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 598-3757. Wednesday, March 8, at 8.)

Art Ensemble of Chicago—Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Wednesday and Thursday, March 8-9, at 11, and Friday and Saturday, March 10-11, at 10 and at midnight.

Angel, Judas Priest, and **the Godz**—Palladium. Friday and Saturday, March 10-11, at 8.

Brass Construction—Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. Saturday, March 11, at 7 and 11.

Ron Carter—Town Hall. Saturday, March 11, at 8.

Taj Mahal, the Persuasions, and **the Son Seals Blues Band**—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 874-1717. Saturday, March 11, at 8.

Doc and Merle Watson and **Bill Harrell and the Virginians**—Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center. Saturday, March 11, at 8 and 11. For information about tickets, call 427-1488.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Antonio Amaral—Large, lively oil paintings, floral in theme, by a Brazilian artist. Through Wednesday, March 8. (Ault, 25 E. 77th St.)

Yannis Amoryanos—Naïve paintings of placid jungle animals amid flower beds. Through March 19. (Clay, 1162 Madison Ave., at 86th St. Open Mondays; open Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Nieves Marschaleck Billmyer—Abstract Expressionist paintings. Through Saturday, March 11. (Bodley, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Julius Bissier (1893-1965)—Small, beautifully colored abstracts done in various mediums and reminiscent of Klee. Through March 18. (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th St.)

Oscar Bluemner (1867-1938) **and Marsden Hartley** (1877-1943)—Landscape paintings from the twenties and thirties by two early members of the Stieglitz gallery group. Through March 25. (Knowlton, 19 E. 71st St.)

Ilya Bolotowsky—Abstract paintings on shaped canvases, and a new set of his brightly colored wood columns. Through March 24. (Borgenicht, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

George Booth—Cartoons and other drawings, some in color, dealing with ill-assorted musical ensembles, shady doings in the garage back room, and what passes for domestic tranquillity in Mr. Booth's special world, with its abundance of ill-tempered cats and dogs. Through Saturday, March 4. (Nicholls, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Stuart Davis (1894-1964)—A show of watercolors done while the artist was still in his teens and a student of Robert Henri, who exhorted his pupils to draw "things in the raw." Subjects include fish markets, vaudeville shows, and street scenes. This exhibit is running concurrently with the Davis show at the Brooklyn Museum. Through Saturday, March 4. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

Nancy Graves—These recent paintings—large and wholly abstract oils, acrylics, and watercolors—have a festive air. Through Thursday, March 9. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)... ¶ What look like the skeletal remains of several prehistoric monsters—skulls, rib cages, leg bones, vertebrae—all heaped together in a five-thousand-pound bronze sculpture. Through April 30. (Hammarskjöld Plaza Sculpture Garden, Second Ave. at 47th St.)

George Inness (1825-94)—Watercolors and drawings by the American landscapist. Through March 25. (Davis & Long, 746 Madison Ave., at 65th St.)

Margaret Israel—A captivating outpouring of sculpture, paintings, and wall pieces by this industrious and wonderfully imaginative artist. Through Saturday, March 4. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Robert LaHotan—Oil paintings that catch the winter bleakness and the summer lushness of the Maine countryside, plus sunny interiors in country houses. Through Saturday, March 4. (Kraushaar, 1055 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Ron Martin and Henry Saxe—Representative works by two Canadian artists. The former, a painter, piles black acrylic on black acrylic until a wavelike effect is created on his canvases; the latter, a sculptor, uses rough slabs of cement and metal structural material in his pieces, one of which takes up a whole room and suggests a building site where work is just commencing. Through March 26. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

Louisa Matthiasdottir—This Icelandic artist reduces her subjects—people, houses, sheep, ponies—to the simplest of forms, which stand out nicely against backgrounds of snowy mountains and deep-blue fjords. Through Saturday, March 11. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Jim Sullivan—Shoes are the main current interest of this artist, specifically a low, blucher-type model, which is depicted in acrylics and with oil sticks. Sometimes the shoe is set in a field of stylized plant life, and on one occasion it is mounted on wheels, like a roadster. Through March 15. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Paul Vázquez—High-pitched colors, slapped onto the canvas with every indication of violence, characterize these works. Through Saturday, March 11. (Findlay, 984 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Helen Miranda Wilson—Oil paintings, mostly small, of waterfront scenes, cityscapes, and still-lifes. Through Saturday, March 11. (Carlton, 127 E. 69th St.)

American Nudes—Wesselmann, Pearlstein, Leslie, Olitsky, Alice Neel, and practically all the other outstanding depicters of the nude figure are represented in this show. Larry Rivers pitches in with a bawdy study of Japanese erotica, and Christo's contribution comes all wrapped up, of course. Through Saturday, March 4. (Reed, 120 E. 78th St. Opens at 1.)

Group Shows—At the **FOURCADE,** 36 E. 75th St.: A de Kooning landscape, a vintage Braque, and a large Lichtenstein that reads like a history of the Surrealist movement are included in a select show of twentieth-century paintings and sculptures. Through April 8.... **SABARSKY,** 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St.: Drawings and watercolors by German and Austrian Expressionists: Kokoschka, Nolde, Schiele. Through March 31.

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Rackstraw Downes—Panoramic landscapes of Manhattan and Maine, painted with a pa-

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tient, almost primitive attention to detail and with a masterly skill in handling oils. They were all done *in situ* over long periods of time; a fall scene in Central Park, for example, took three autumns in the making. Through March 17. (Kornblee, 20 W. 57th St.)

Sherron L. Francis—This abstract artist, very sparing with her color, extends a few ribbons of it across a stucco-like surface and then dims most of it with an opaque wash. Through Thursday, March 9. (De Nagy, 29 W. 57th St.)

David Fredenthal (1914-58)—Paintings of Manhattan dominate this show by a vigorous realist whose works seem to be an amalgamation of all the leading artistic influences of the nineteen-thirties. Through Saturday, March 11. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Edward Giobbi—Basic architectural forms shown in outline and filled in with abstract patches of brilliant color. Through Saturday, March 11. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

Allan Hacklin—Wooden pieces made of a pale Russian plywood polished with white plaster. Many of them look like household utensils for which a purpose has yet to be invented. Through March 18. (Truman, 38 E. 57th St.)

James Hagan / Bisson Frères—Rough-hewn abstract wooden sculpture, some of it ceiling high, chopped out of oak logs for the most part, and some of it totemic in feeling. / These no-nonsense photographs, taken in 1861, mark the "Premiere Ascension Photographique au Mont Blanc," and are the work of Louis-Auguste and Auguste-Rosalie Bisson, two French brothers who were pioneer landscape photographers. Additional Alpine pictures by the same pair are also shown. Through March 25. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Dorothy Heller—Curtains of almost countless vertical lines painted in jet-black acrylic on a dead-white ground. Through Saturday, March 4. (Parsons, 24 W. 57th St.)

James Juszczyk—Abstract paintings by a colorist who divides his canvases into rectangles of various size and gives each section a contrasting or harmonizing tone, built up by repeated applications of acrylics and glazes. Through Saturday, March 11. (Esman, 29 W. 57th St.)

Alex Katz—A self-portrait and other recent paintings. Through March 25. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St.)

Winifred Lutz—This artist pays homage to redwood in a series of sculptures, handsomely carpentered, that begins with a sort of doorway, goes on to a low platform with several deep, built-in recesses, and ends with a vaguely pyramidal structure, in two parts, which one can walk through. Several drawings, incorporating thin slices of the wood, round out the exhibit. Through March 15. (Pearl, 29 W. 57th St.)

Richard Merkin—Oil, watercolor, hard-edge charcoal drawing, and collage go into this artist's polished compositions, which have a documentary quality in that they make references—sometimes overt and sometimes oblique—to lively personalities, mostly literary (A. J. Liebling, Michael Arlen, William Seabrook). Through Friday, March 3. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Rodney Ripps—Friezelike wall pieces built up of cloth leaves caked over with several inches of oil paint mixed with wax in riotous colors. Through March 18. (Alexander, 20 W. 57th St.)

Morgan Russell (1886-1953)—Small, sensitive figure drawings done under the tutelage of Matisse, color notes for formal works, and memorabilia make up a show of this Synchromist artist's work that is running concurrently with one at the Whitney. Through Saturday, March 11. (Washburn, 42 E. 57th St.)

Lucas Samaras—New works consisting of fabric pieced together to form chaotic patterns. Through March 18. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Jason Schoener—Landscapes: England, Scotland, Maine. Through March 25. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Joan Snyder—New works by this feminist polemicist, who uses clippings about sex crimes as collage in her paintings; one work, an eight-panel mural twenty-six feet long, proceeds from abstractions of shattering outrage to the peace of Elysian realms. Through March 25. (Hamilton, 20 W. 57th St.)

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Pat Steir—Oil on canvas, pencil on paper. Through March 25. (Droll-Kolbert, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Bill Taggart—Paintings, drawings, Xerox collages, and other works. Through March 18. (Parsons-Dreyfuss, 24 W. 57th St.)

Indian Paintings—These small treasures from the subcontinent date from 1640 to 1850, and show a marked Persian influence. They are done in gouache, in splendid detail. Through Saturday, March 11. (Heidenberg, 50 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **genesis**, 41 E. 57th St.: Red Grooms' wall-size portrayal of Paul Bocuse's celebrated restaurant in Lyons, showing the chef and his kitchen and some of his patrons and some of his wares, more or less dominates this show, entitled "The Human Figure in Contemporary Painting & Sculpture in the United States of America." Among the other luminaries are Marisol, Larry Rivers, Wesselmann, Pearlstein, Segal, Alice Neel. Through Saturday, March 4. . . . **hammer**, 51 E. 57th St.: Nineteenth- and twentieth-century French paintings by Pissarro, Bonnard, and others. Through March 18. (Open Mondays.) . . . **janis**, 6 W. 57th St.: Paintings and sculptures by seven Americans, including new pieces by Marisol (wooden figures of her father and Picasso which look as if they had been chopped out with a hatchet); Wesselmann (another in the Great American Nude series); and Segal (plaster life casts painted pink or blue). Through Saturday, March 4.

GALLERIES—SoHo

Noah Baen / Audrey Bergensten—Expressionist landscapes and figures. / Stylized paintings, mostly of sloe-eyed women, which have some of the quality of primitive icons. Through Wednesday, March 8. (Green Mountain, 135 Greene St. Opens at noon.)

Daria Dorosh—Abstract paintings in which oilstick colors are scrubbed into canvas-backed paper. Through Wednesday, March 8. (A.I.R., 97 Wooster St.)

Rafael Ferrer—Full-size kayaks made of found sheet metal, an environment entitled (in bright neon) "Valparaiso," and wildly colorful drawings evoking the Caribbean. Through Thursday, March 9. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Sharyn Finnegan—Small, precisely painted landscapes (New England and the mountains of the Southwest) and a few figure paintings (one a self-portrait in two panels that divide the artist down the middle; the half on the left is clothed, the one on the right isn't). Through Wednesday, March 8. (Prince Street Gallery, 106 Prince St. Tuesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

Joan Gardner—Childhood memories (and fantasies) are the subject of these works, in which painted and crayoned figures are cut out of linen and affixed to canvas. Through Saturday, March 11. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Margaret Grace—Colorful and nicely organized cityscapes, mostly focussed on rooftops and the low-rent areas. Through Wednesday, March 8. (Bowery, 135 Greene St. Opens at 1.)

Stevan Jennis—Groups of small, glossy, painted cardboard sculptures set on pedestals. Through Saturday, March 4. (Freidus, 158 Lafayette St., near Grand St.)

Knox Martin—Large, bright-colored abstract paintings with an *art-moderne* flavor by an artist whose fundamental subject is Woman. Through Wednesday, March 8. (Jack, 138 Prince St. Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

Jimms Nelson—Outsize abstract paintings, vividly colored, which might be highly magnified depictions of something organic seen through a microscope. Through Wednesday, March 8. (Razor, 464 West Broadway. Opens at noon.)

Lisa Roggli—Marble sculptures. Through March 15. (14 Sculptors, 75 Thompson St. Opens at noon.)

Fred Sandback—A single construction and related drawings by a Minimalist. Through Saturday, March 11. (Friedrich, 393 West Broadway. Opens at noon.)

John Walker—Big abstract collages—painted canvas on painted canvas—that are done in industrial colors and look as if they might be made of boiler plate instead of a fabric. They are by an Englishman who is an artist-in-residence at Oxford. Through March 15. (Cuningham Ward, 94 Prince St.)

Joe Zucker—New paintings by an artist whose mediums are cotton balls dipped in acrylic, and Rhoplex, and whose theme this time concerns pirates. Through March 18. (Holly Solomon, 392 West Broadway.)

Group Show—Drawings by ten young artists. Through Saturday, March 11. (The Drawing Center, 137 Greene St. Open Mondays; open Wednesday evenings until 9.)

Sculpture—New pieces by Lyman Kipp and Peter Forakis (through March 18), and by Richard Fishman (through March 25). (Sculpture Now, 142 Greene St.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Don Freeman (1908-78)—A memorial exhibition of his oils, drawings, watercolors, and lithographs. Through March 31. (Feiden, 51 E. 10th St. Open Mondays; Saturday hours are 12:30 to 4:30.)

Ann Norton—Large red-cedar sculptures, and related watercolors. Through March 18. (The Clocktower, 108 Leonard St., four blocks south of Canal St., at Broadway. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

Merrill Wagner—Drawings in which graphite markings are transferred to masking tape. Through Friday, March 10. (Pretto, 176 Franklin St., near Hudson St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, 3 to 6.)

Designs for the New York Stage—Joseph Urban's costume sketches for the Metropolitan Opera's 1925 "Pelléas et Mélisande;" Gordon Craig's sets for a 1928 "Macbeth;" and more recent work by Cecil Beaton, Ming Cho Lee, and others—sixty in all. Through March 14. (Pace University, 41 Park Row. Open Mondays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Linda Connor / Anthony Dubovsky—Gold-toned soft-focus prints of landscapes, mostly. / Photomontages. Through March 25. (Light, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Bea Nettles / Norman Sanders—Surreal prints made by such non-silver processes as silk-screening, a 3M copier, and a commercial color method. / This photographer has set himself the task of recording people in their favorite rooms at home. Home in this case is Rockland County, and the subjects are Mr. Sanders' neighbors. Through Saturday, March 4. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St.)

Fred Picker—New England landscapes by a photographer who makes his home in Vermont. Through Saturday, March 11. (Helios, 18 E. 67th St.)

F. A. Rinehart (1861-1928)—Platinum-print studio portraits of American Indians (among the more famous, Chief Red Cloud, Geronimo, and Chief American Horse) made at an Omaha fair in 1898. Through Saturday, March 11. (Prakapas, 19 E. 71st St.)

John Thomson (1837-1921)—A record of his travels in China, Cyprus, and Cambodia, as well as an early essay on street people in London. Through April 1. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St.)

James Van DerZee—An exhibit of his photo-

Florence Eiseman

Greg Puza

Of all people
children are the most imaginative — *Macaulay*

Florence Eiseman

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The Red Balloon - Orange County, and other fine stores.

A beautiful 16 × 22 poster of the above thought and illustration is available from Florence Eiseman, 301 N. Water St., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202.

graphs chronicling black life in America, and in particular Harlem, has been mounted by the Brooklyn Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Group Shows—At the **International Center of Photography**, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.: A comprehensive survey of Swiss photography, from 1840 to the present, from photojournalism to portraiture. Through Sunday, March 5. . . . **Museum of Modern Art**, 11 W. 53rd St.: Two photographic exhibitions are on view here. One consists of about seventy-five prints by Edward Steichen (all of them made prior to the outbreak of the First World War); the other, a group show (the subject is streets of America and the dates covered are 1940-55), includes works by Lisette Model, Louis Faurer, and Robert Frank. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Views of Rome by Giovanni Battista Piranesi and other prints and drawings constitute a show called "Artists in Rome in the Eighteenth Century." Through May 7. . . . ¶ A show of twentieth-century decorative objects, including silver designed by Georg Jensen; woodwork designed by James Prestini; and a wall hanging by Anni Albers, from the permanent collection. . . . ¶ An exhibit of about five hundred items in the costume collection. For their time and place, they represent the ne plus ultra in luxury, such as a pair of seventeenth-century French white-kid shoes embroidered in pastel-colored and metal-silk thread, and a Fortuny evening dress from this century trimmed with Venetian-glass beads. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A huge, open-sided cube, eight feet tall and painted in white enamel, stands near the entrance to the Sol LeWitt retrospective, and permutations of this simple form—some in tiny sketches on graph paper and some (hundreds) in three-dimensional stark-white honeycombs of steel or wood—continue throughout the exhibition. Through April 4. A complementary show at the Brooklyn Museum ends Saturday. . . . ¶ A show of ninety architectural drawings that Le Corbusier made for half as many projects (studio assistants had a hand in some of the sketches) between the years 1912 and 1962. Through March 26. . . . ¶ An exhibit of collages and drawings by Jean Arp. Through Sunday, March 5. . . . **Photography**: Early Steichen prints. Through March 28. . . . ¶ Group show of street photography. Through April 30. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—"Willem de Kooning in East Hampton," a show of the noted artist's paintings, drawings, and sculptures executed since 1963, when he moved from New York City to Long Island. Through April 23. . . . ¶ Collages by the contemporary Czech artist Jiří Kolář which incorporate written and printed texts, maps, photographs, and so forth. Through March 26. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—"Synchromism and American Color Abstraction, 1910-1925" brings together the works of the founders of Synchromism—Morgan Russell and Stanton Macdonald-Wright—with works by twenty-eight American and three European artists (Marsden Hartley, Joseph Stella, and Robert Delaunay among them), all of whom were early experimenters in pure-color abstraction. Through March 26. . . . ¶ A show of Duane Hanson's startlingly realistic polyester and fibre-glass life casts—twenty-nine pieces in all, including "Hard Hat," "Rita the Waitress," and "Photographer." Through April 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 9, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A show of Stuart Davis's work, including a large-scale mural and seventy paintings supplemented by watercolors and sketches. Through March 19. A complementary show (ending Saturday) is at the Hirschl & Adler Galleries. . . . ¶ Sol LeWitt's prints from the seventies. Through Saturday, March 4. (See also Museum of Modern Art, above.) . . . **Photography**: Works by James Van DerZee. Through March 12. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

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American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—No surprises at the moment: just the usual exhibits and collections. (Open daily. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 4:45, and Wednesday evenings until 9; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Asia House, 112 E. 64th St.—A show of drinking vessels and such, made of metal (often silver) and engraved, embossed, or inlaid with niello, the work of Persian craftsmen of the Sasanian Empire (226 to 651 A.D.). Also related works. Through March 12. (Open daily. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A display of books that have been enhanced by an inscription or a drawing either by the author or simply by a reader; for example, James Thurber made thirteen pencil drawings in his first edition of Hemingway's "Green Hills of Africa," and it is on view. Through Sunday, March 5. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, 49 W. 53rd St.—A show devoted to representations of dogs in such folk-art forms as pottery, needlework, furniture, and paintings. Through April 2. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 580-9830, for Avery Fisher Hall TR 4-2424, for Carnegie Hall CI 7-7459, and for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday evening, March 1: "La Favorita," with Shirley Verrett, Alma Jean Smith, Luciano Pavarotti, Sherrill Milnes, and Bonaldo Giaiotti; conducted by Jesús López-Cobos. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, March 2: "L'Elisir d'Amore," with Judith Blegen, Loretta Di Franco, José Carreras, Mario Sereni, and Fernando Corena; Sarah Caldwell. . . . ¶ Friday evening, March 3: "Thaïs," with Beverly Sills, Sherrill Milnes, Jean Van Ree, and James Morris; John Pritchard. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, March 4: "Pelléas et Mélisande," with Teresa Stratas, Mignon Dunn, Raymond Gibbs, Gabriel Bacquier, and Jerome Hines; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, March 4: "Boris Godunov," with Mignon Dunn, Martti Talvela, Wieslaw Ochman, Robert Nagy, Misha Raitzin, Morley Meredith, Allan Monk, Paul Plishka, and Fernando Corena; Kazimierz Kord. . . . ¶ Monday evening, March 6: "L'Elisir d'Amore," with Judith Blegen, Loretta Di Franco, José Carreras, Mario Sereni, and Fernando Corena; Sarah Caldwell. . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, March 7: "La Favorita," with Shirley Verrett, Alma Jean Smith, Luciano Pavarotti, Sherrill Milnes, and Bonaldo Giaiotti, Jesús López-Cobos. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, March 8: "Adriana Lecouvreur," with Montserrat Caballé, Fiorenza Cossotto, John Alexander, Louis Quilico, and Ivo Vinco; Jesús López-Cobos. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, March 9: "L'Elisir d'Amore," with Judith Blegen, Loretta Di Franco, José Carreras, Mario Sereni, and Fernando Corena; Sarah Caldwell. . . . ¶ Friday evening, March 10: "Don Giovanni," with Joan Sutherland, Julia Varady, Huguette Tourangeau, James Morris, John Brecknock, Gabriel Bacquier, Allan Monk, and John Macurdy; Richard Bonynge. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, March 11: "La Favorita," with Shirley Verrett, Alma Jean Smith, Luciano Pavarotti, Sherrill Milnes, and Bonaldo Giaiotti; Jesús López-Cobos. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, March 11: "Adriana Lecouvreur," with Montserrat Caballé, Fiorenza Cossotto, José Carreras, Louis Quilico, and Ivo Vinco; Jesús López-Cobos. (Evenings at 8. Matinées Saturday, March 4, at 1:30, and Saturday, March 11, at 2.)

New York City Opera—Wednesday, March 1, at 8: "La Bohème," with Mariana Niculescu, Sharon Daniels, Enrico Di Giuseppe, David Holloway, and Thomas Jamerson; conducted by John Mauceri. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 2, at 8: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Gianna Rolandi, Jane Shaulis, Henry Price, Pablo Elvira, and Richard McKee; John Mauceri. . . . ¶ Friday, March 3, at 8: "La Fanciulla del West," with Marilyn Zschau, Ermanno Mauro, and Vern Shinall; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 4, at 2: "La Bohème," with Cynthia Clarey, Sharon Daniels, Lando Bartolini, David Holloway, and Thomas Jamerson; John Mauceri. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 4, at 8: "Rigoletto," with Faye Robinson, Eunice Hill, Kenneth Collins, Pablo Elvira, Irwin Densen, and Philip Steele; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Sunday, March 5, at 1: "Carmen," with Ann Howard, Glenys Fowles, Jacque Trussel, and Richard Fredricks; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Sunday, March 5, at 7: "La Fanciulla del West," with Marilyn Zschau, Ermanno Mauro, and Vern Shinall; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 7, at 8: "Rigoletto," with Faye Robinson, Eunice Hill, Kenneth Collins, and Pablo Elvira; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 8, at 8: "Die Fledermaus" (in English), with Patti Allison, Gianna Rolandi, Henry Price, Charles Roe, Thomas Jamerson, Harlan Foss, Richard McKee, and Coley Worth; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 9, at 8: "Carmen," with Ann Howard, Glenys Fowles, Jacque Trussel, and David Holloway; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Friday, March 10, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Eileen Schauler, Eunice Hill, Lando Bartolini, and Charles Long; and "Pagliacci," with Sherry Zannoth, Kenneth Collins, and Richard Fredricks. Cal Stewart Kellogg conducting both. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 11, at 2: "La Fanciulla del West," with Arlene Saunders, Jacque Trussel, Fredrick Burchinal, and Thomas Jamerson; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 11, at 8: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Gianna Rolandi, Jane Shaulis, Henry Price, Pablo Elvira, and Richard McKee; John Mauceri. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727. Through Sunday, April 30.)

John Brownlee Opera Theatre—Benefit performances of the New York première of Nino Rota's "Italian Straw Hat," in English. Conducted by John Crosby and staged by Louis Galterio. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St. Thursday, March 9, and Saturday, March 11, at 8, and Sunday, March 12, at 2:30. For information about tickets, call RI 9-2802, Ext. 503.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—James Levine conducting on Thursday, March 2, at 8:30; Friday, March 3, at 2; Saturday, March 4, at 8:30; and Tuesday, March 7, at 7:30 (all with Christoph Eschenbach, piano). . . . ¶ Karl Böhm conducting a program on Monday, March 6, at 8:30, for the benefit of the Philharmonic's Pension Fund (with Maurizio Pollini, piano, and Rodney Friend, violin). . . . ¶ James Levine conducting Thursday through Saturday, March 9-11, at 8:30 (all with Lynn Harrell, cello).

National Symphony Orchestra—Mstislav Rostropovich conducting the last in a series of concerts, this one with Rudolf Serkin, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, March 3, at 8.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Riccardo Muti directing a performance of Prokofieff's choral work "Ivan the Terrible," with Claudine Carlson, mezzo-soprano; Boris Carmeli, bass; and the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, March 7, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonia—Sarah Caldwell conducting an all-Berlioz program, with Régine Crespin, soprano. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Friday and Saturday, March 3-4, at 8, and Sunday, March 5, at 3.)

All-Schubert Concert—Charlotte Bergen conducting a symphony orchestra. (Carnegie

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Hall. Saturday, March 4, at 2:30. No tickets necessary.)

Tarack Chamber Ensemble—A chamber group that performs without a conductor. The last in a series of concerts. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Friday, March 10, at 8:30.)

Musica Aeterna Orchestra—Frederic Waldman conducting, with Paula Robison, flute. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, March 11, at 8. All seats have been sold, and only standing room is left.)

Y Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz conducting, with Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Saturday, March 11, at 8.)

Augustana Concert Band—George Opheim conducting. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Wednesday, March 1, at 8:15.)...¶ St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Thursday, March 2, at noon and 8. Admission by contribution.

Gregg Smith Singers—Gregg Smith directing three Bach secular cantatas, with Rosalind Rees, soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 11, at 8.)

RECITALS

Ingrid Dingfelder and Herbert Levine—Flute and guitar. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, March 1, at 8.)

Maurizio Pollini—Piano, playing the last six Beethoven sonatas in two recitals. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 1, and Sunday, March 5, at 8.)

Ilan Rogoff—Piano, in an all-Chopin recital. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday, March 1, at 8.)

Speculum Musicae—The second in a series of three programs of twentieth-century music, this one with David Evitts, bass-baritone, and the Emmanuel Choir of Boston. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, March 2, at 8.)

Jan DeGaetani—Mezzo-soprano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Friday, March 3, at 8.)

Jan Dobrzelewski—Violin. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Friday, March 3, at 8.)

Marian Hahn—Piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, March 4, at 2:30.)

Lawrence Schubert—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Saturday, March 4, at 2:30.)

Jorge Bolet—Piano, in the last in a series of recitals, this one an all-Rachmaninoff program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, March 4, at 8. All seats have been sold, and only standing room is left.)

Vladimir Ashkenazy and Itzhak Perlman—The first two in a series of three recitals presenting the cycle of Beethoven sonatas for piano and violin. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 4, and Saturday, March 11, at 8.)

Galimir Quartet—With Emanuel Ax, piano. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, March 4, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680....¶ Same program; New School, 66 W. 12th St. 741-5689. Sunday, March 5, at 2.)

Stony Brook Concerts—The last in a series of recitals by artists in residence of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, this one with Jack Kreiselman, clarinet; Ida Kavafian, violin; Timothy Eddy, cello; Raymond DesRoches, percussion; Arthur Weisberg, conductor; and others. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Saturday, March 4, at 8.)

Robert Bloch and Louis Bagger—Violin and harpsichord, in a recital of sonatas by J.S., C.P.E., and W.F. Bach. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Saturday, March 4, at 8:30.)

Elly Ameling—Soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 5, at 3.)

Andreas Klein—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Sunday, March 5, at 5:45.)

Lazar Berman—Piano, in a recital postponed from Jan. 22. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 5, at 8.)

Eastman School of Music Series—The last in a series of concerts, this one performed by James B. Van Demark, double bass; Robert Spillman, piano; and Thomas Paul, bass-baritone. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 5, at 8.)

Group for Contemporary Music—A program (postponed from Feb. 6) of music by Edgard Varèse, Harvey Sollberger, and Charles Wuorinen, performed by the New Jersey Percussion Ensemble. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Monday, March 6, at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Thomas Demenga—Cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, March 7, at 8.)

Richard Stoltzman—Clarinet, with the Beaux Arts Trio. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Tuesday, March 7, at 8.)

Gundula Janowitz—Soprano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, March 8, at 8.)

Alan Marks—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday, March 8, at 8.)

Galina Vishnevskaya and Mstislav Rostropovich—Soprano and piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 8, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—Chamber music. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday and Thursday, March 8-9, at 8, with Pinchas Zukerman, viola....¶ Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Friday, March 10, at 8, the fifth in a series of six concerts presenting the Beethoven cycle. All seats have been sold for this program, and only standing room is left.)

Da Capo Chamber Players—A program of contemporary music, with Judith Nicosia, soprano, and others. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Wednesday, March 8, at 8.)

Sharon Robinson and Samuel Sanders—Cello and piano, in a benefit recital. (Brotherhood Synagogue, 28 Gramercy Park S. Thursday, March 9, at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Claude Savard—Piano. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Thursday, March 9, at 8.)

Ann Zalkind—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Thursday, March 9, at 8.)

Marion Feldman—Cello. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, March 10, at 8.)

Sandra Warfield—Mezzo-soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, March 10, at 8.)

Toby Appel—Viola. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 11, at 2.)

Beethoven Society—The Cleveland Quartet in the second in a series of five concerts presenting the Beethoven cycle. (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. Saturday, March 11, at 3. For information about tickets, call 682-3900.)

Mark Zeltser—Piano. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, March 11, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Three twentieth-century chamber works, with the Summit (N.J.) Chorale. (Church of St. Luke in-the-Fields, 487 Hudson St., at Grove St. Saturday, March 11, at 8. For information about tickets, call 943-0950.)

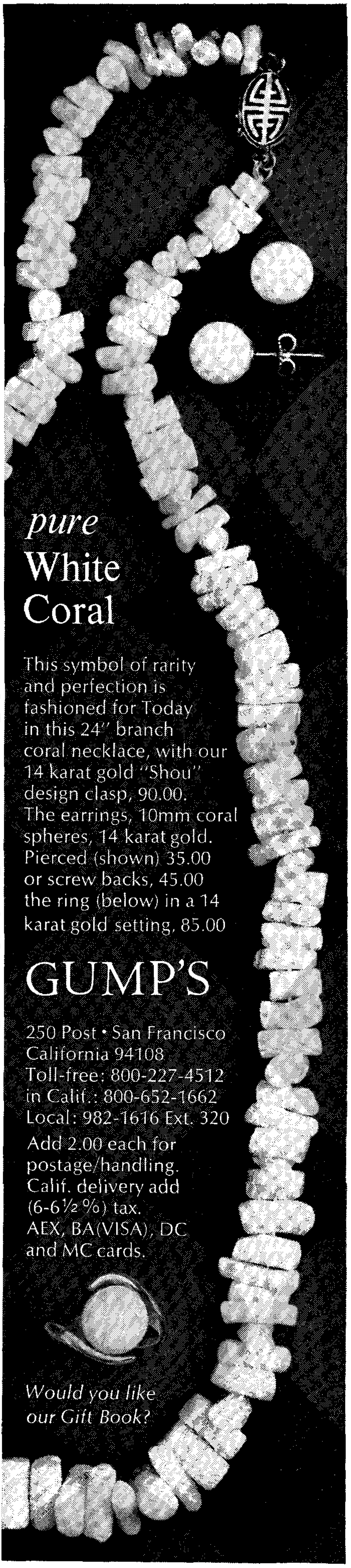
Ani Kavafian, Ronald Roseman, Kenneth Cooper, and Richard Taruskin—Violin, oboe, harpsichord, and viola da gamba, in a program of baroque music. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Saturday, March 11, at 8:30, and Sunday, March 12, at 2.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts., is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Portland, Thursday, March 2, at 7:30....¶ Knicks vs. Boston, Saturday, March 4, at 8....¶ Knicks vs. Houston, Tuesday, March 7, at 7:30....¶ Knicks vs. Nets, Saturday, March 11, at 8.... **rutgers university athletic center**, Piscataway, N.J.: Nets vs. Atlanta, Wednesday, March 1, at 8:05....¶ Nets vs. Buffalo, Sunday, March 5, at 1:35....¶ Nets vs. New Orleans, Friday, March 10, at 8:05. (For information about tickets, call 977-9020.)

Boxing—Golden Gloves New York City finals.



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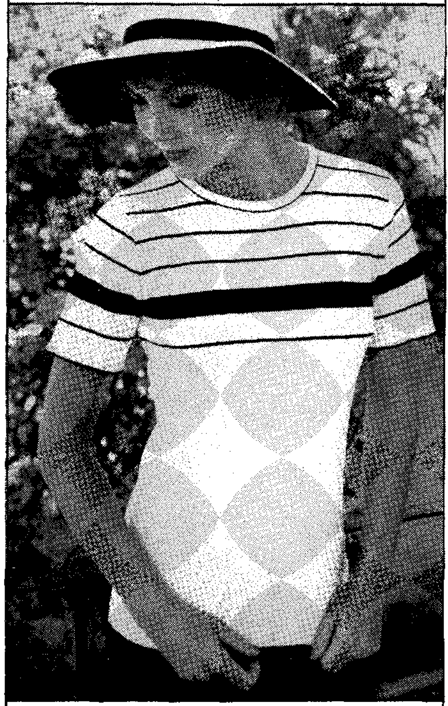

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Sponsored by the News Charities, Inc. (Madison Square Garden. Friday, March 10, at 8.)

GYMNASTICS—The American Cup International Gymnastics Competition. (Madison Square Garden. Saturday and Sunday, March 11-12, at noon.)

HOCKEY—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN (all games at 7:35): Rangers vs. Detroit Red Wings, Wednesday, March 1. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Sunday, March 5. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Cleveland Barons, Wednesday, March 8. . . . NASSAU COLISEUM (all games at 8:05): Islanders vs. Pittsburgh Penguins, Saturday, March 4. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Vancouver Canucks, Tuesday, March 7. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Buffalo Sabres, Saturday, March 11. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 516 794-9100.)

KARATE—All-American Open Karate Championships. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. Saturday, March 4, at 7:30.)

RACING—At AQUEDUCT: Thursdays through Saturdays, and Mondays, at 12:30, and Sundays at 1:05; last day Monday, May 22. The Next Move Handicap, Sunday, March 5, and the Swift, Saturday, March 11. . . . BOWIE, Md.: Weekdays at 1; through Friday, March 17. The Barbara Fritchie Handicap, Saturday, March 4, and the John B. Campbell Handicap, Saturday, March 11.

TROTTING—At ROOSEVELT RACEWAY, Westbury: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, April 29. . . . MEADOWLANDS RACETRACK: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Aug. 5.

ET ALIA

(The New York Parks Department number to call for information about all free entertainment in the city is 755-4100.)

POETRY READINGS—John Logan and Diane Wakoski reading from their own works. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Monday, March 6, at 8.) . . . ¶ Larry Levis and Stan Rice reading from their own works. (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. Thursday, March 9, at 6:30. No tickets necessary.)

PARK AVENUE ANTIQUES FAIR—American and European furniture, silver, art, porcelains, and other objects from the past. Also on display will be the Newport Casino's collection of antique tennis racquets and tennis memorabilia. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Wednesday through Saturday, March 8-11, from 12:30 to 9:30, and Sunday, March 12, from noon to 6.)

AUCTIONS—At SOTHEBY PARKE BERNET, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.) Wednesday and Thursday, March 1-2, at 10:15 and 2: Silver, watches, and *objets de vertu; from a number of owners.* . . . ¶ Friday, March 3, at 10:15 and 2: Pre-Columbian and American Indian art; from many sources. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 4, at 2: Oriental rugs, from various owners. . . . CHRISTIE'S, 502s Park Ave., at 59th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.) Wednesday, March 1, at 10:30: Jewels, from the estate of Joan Crawford and from other sources. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 8, at 10:30 and 2: English, American, and Continental silver, watches, and *objets de vertu;* from the estate of George D. Widener and from other sources. Exhibition starts Thursday, March 2.

COMING EVENTS

(A checklist for readers who plan ahead.)

BASEBALL—First league games here—METS at Shea Stadium: Vs. Montreal, April 7-8 (day) and April 9 (day doubleheader). Chicago, April 10-12 (d). . . . YANKEES at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Chicago, April 13, 15, and 16 (all day games).

PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL—The Knicks at MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: March 14 (Los Angeles), March 18 (Philadelphia), March 28 (Denver), March 30 (Washington), April 4 (Atlanta), and April 6 (Detroit). . . . ¶ The Nets at RUTGERS UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC CENTER, Piscataway, N.J.: March 12 (Detroit), March 15 (Phoenix), March 17 (Denver), March 22 (Chicago), March 24 (Washington), and March 31 (Milwaukee).

GOLF—Masters Tournament. (Augusta National Golf Club, Augusta, Ga. April 6-9.)

HOCKEY—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Rangers games on March 12, 15, 18, 27, and 29, and April 5 and 9. . . . NASSAU COLISEUM: Islanders games on March 14, 18, 25, and 26, and April 1, 4, and 8.

RACING—At Aintree, England: The Grand National Steeplechase, April 1.

SOCCER—Cosmos vs. Ft. Lauderdale. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. April 2.)

MUSIC—METROPOLITAN OPERA (580-9830): The season continues through April 15. . . . AVERY FISHER HALL (TR 4-2424): The New York Philharmonic season continues through April 29. . . . ¶ Pro Arte Chorale and Orchestra, March 18. . . . ¶ Brandenburg Ensemble, March 19. . . . ¶ Musica Sacra, March 22. . . . ¶ Sacred Music Society of America, April 3. . . . ¶ Philadelphia Orchestra, April 5. . . . CARNEGIE HALL (CI 7-7459): Vladimir Horowitz, piano, March 12 and 19. . . . ¶ Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, March 13. . . . ¶ Opera Orchestra of New York, March 14 and 29. . . . ¶ Tatiana Troyanos, mezzo-soprano, March 16. . . . ¶ Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute, and the Juilliard String Quartet, March 17. . . . ¶ *Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano, and Itzhak* Perlman, violin, March 18. . . . ¶ Montserrat Caballé, soprano, March 19. . . . ¶ Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone, and Jörg Demus, piano, March 22, 25, and 31. . . . ¶ American Symphony Orchestra, March 26. . . . ¶ Orpheus, March 27. . . . ¶ Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, April 6. . . . ¶ St. Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra, April 8. . . . ¶ Symphony of the New World, April 9. . . . ALICE TULLY HALL (362-1911): Lynn Harrell, cello, and the Guarneri Quartet, March 12. . . . ¶ Music from Marlboro, March 13. . . . ¶ Mark Zeltser, piano, March 15. . . . ¶ Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, March 17, 19, 26, and 28. . . . ¶ Municipal Concerts Orchestra, March 18. . . . ¶ Continuum, March 20. . . . ¶ Ani Kavafian, violin, March 21. . . . ¶ Ensemble for Early Music, March 22. . . . ¶ Apple Hill Chamber Players, March 24. . . . ¶ Anne Perret, mezzo-soprano, and Rodrigo de Zayas, lute, March 25. . . . ¶ Montserrat Caballé, soprano, and Alicia de Larrocha, piano, March 26. . . . ¶ New York Renaissance Band, April 1. . . . ¶ Miriam Fried, violin, and Garrick Ohlsson, piano, April 2. . . . ¶ Frans Brueggen, recorder/baroque flute, April 9. . . . KAUFMANN CONCERT HALL, 92nd Street Y (427-6000): Michel Block, piano, March 14, 21, and 28. . . . ¶ Alexis Weissenberg, piano, March 18. . . . ¶ Kyung-Wha Chung, violin, March 25. . . . ¶ Chamber Music at the Y, March 29. . . . ¶ Zvi Zeitlin, violin, April 1. . . . ¶ Richard Stoltzman, clarinet, and the Amadeus String Quartet, April 3. . . . ¶ Ruth Laredo, piano, April 4. . . . ¶ Shura Cherkassky, piano, April 8. . . . GRACE RAINEY ROGERS AUDITORIUM, Metropolitan Museum (879-5512): Misha Dichter, piano, March 17. . . . ¶ Music from Aston Magna, March 18. . . . ¶ *Misha and Cipa Dichter, pianos, March 28.* . . . ¶ Vladimir Spivakov, violin, April 7.

DANCE—At the City Center: Royal Winnipeg Ballet, March 28-April 4. . . . ¶ Joffrey Ballet, April 5-30.

THEATRE—Some productions scheduled to open during the next several weeks: A revival of Paul Zindel's play "The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds," starring Shelley Winters and Carol Kane. . . . ¶ Louis Jourdan, Patricia Elliott, Bernard Fox, and Hermione Baddeley in Feydeau's "13 Rue de l'Amour," adapted and translated by Mawby Green and Ed Feilbert. . . . ¶ A play by Stuart Ostrow called "Stages," with a cast headed by Jack Warden. . . . ¶ "Dancin'," a musical entertainment conceived by Bob Fosse, with classical and contemporary music (from Bach to Jerry Jeff Walker) and a dozen and a half (more or less) performers, including Gail Benedict, Ann Reinking, and Charles Ward. . . . ¶ A comedy, "A History of the American Film," by Christopher Durang, with music by Mel Marvin; among those in the cast are April Shawhan, Swoosie Kurtz, Brent Spiner, Gary Bayer, and Joan Pape.

OTHER DATES—St. Patrick's Day is Friday, March 17. . . . ¶ The Spring Flower Show, at the Horticultural Society of New York, 128 W. 58th St., March 17-19. . . . ¶ The first day of spring is March 20. . . . ¶ The Circus, at Madison Square Garden, March 22-June 4. . . . ¶ Easter Sunday is March 26. . . . ¶ Federal, New York State, and New York City income-tax returns for 1977 and estimates for 1978 are due Saturday, April 15.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THURS. FRI
MING SOON

EAST SIDE

ART, 36 E. 8th. (GR 3-7014)
"Saturday Night Fever."

ST. MARKS CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through March 2: "The Great Dictator" and "Modern Times."
March 3-7: "Beyond and Back" and "Barbarella."
From March 8: To be announced.

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (GR 5-1660)
"Saturday Night Fever."

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through March 4: "The Boys in Company C."
From March 5: "Coma."

MURRAY HILL, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
Through March 4: "Coma."
From March 5: "An Unmarried Woman."

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"The One and Only."

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"The Betsy."

SUTTON, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (PL 9-1411)
"High Anxiety."

TRANS-LUX EAST, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (PL 9-2262)
"Blue Collar."

FINE ARTS, 130 E. 58th. (755-6030)
"The Duellists."

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (EL 5-3320)
"Coma."

BARONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Through March 2: "Dersu Uzala."
From March 3: "Homage to Chagall—The Colours of Love."

CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"The Serpent's Egg."

59TH ST. EAST, 220 E. 59th. (688-0750)
"The Savage Is Loose."

D. W. GRIFFITH, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"The Goodbye Girl."

CINEMA I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-6022)
"Coming Home."

CINEMA II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-0774)
Through March 2: "Padre Padrone."
From March 3: "Fingers."

COLUMBIA I, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Through March 7: "Annie Hall."
From March 8: "A Little Night Music."

COLUMBIA II, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
"That Obscure Object of Desire."

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (RE 7-2622)
Through March 4: "The Turning Point."
From March 5: "An Unmarried Woman."

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (RE 4-0302)
"Blue Country."

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The End of the World in Our Usual Bed in a Night Full of Rain."

72ND STREET EAST, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (BU 8-9304)
Through March 7: "Saturday Night Fever."
From March 8: "Semi-Tough."

TRANS-LUX 85TH ST., Madison at 85th. (BU 8-3180)
"Julia."

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"The Betsy."

LOEWS ORPHEUM, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"The Boys in Company C."

LOEWS CINÉ, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"The One and Only."

86TH ST. EAST, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Blue Collar."

R.K.O. 86TH ST. TWIN 1, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
"The Turning Point."

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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5	6	7	8	9		

THE FILMS PLAYING THE REGULAR MOVIE HOUSES ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN THE SECTION BELOW

R.K.O. 86TH ST. TWIN 2, Lexington at 86th. (289-8932)
"The Goodbye Girl."

WEST SIDE

WAVERLY, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"The Betsy."

GREENWICH, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Through March 2: "Beyond and Back."
From March 3: To be announced.

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Turning Point."
Theatre 2: "Julia."
Theatre 3: "Sebastiane."
Theatre 4: "The Children of Theatre Street."

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (PL 7-2406)
"Operation Thunderbolt."

MUSIC HALL, 6th Ave. at 50th. (757-3100)
March 1: Theatre closed.
From March 2: "Crossed Swords."

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"Julia."

PLAYBOY, 110 W. 57th. (JU 6-4448)
Through March 7: "Beyond and Back."
From March 8: "Semi-Tough."

LITTLE CARNEGIE, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"The Turning Point."

PARIS, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands."

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"High Anxiety."

PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
Through March 4: "High Anxiety."
From March 5: "An Unmarried Woman."

CINEMA STUDIO, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
March 1: "Céline and Julie Go Boating."
March 2-6: "Landscape After Battle."
From March 7: "Furtivos."

EMBASSY 72ND ST., B'way at 72nd. (SC 4-6745)
"Annie Hall."

LOEWS 83RD TRIPLEX, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: "Julia."
Theatre 2: "The Goodbye Girl."
Theatre 3: "Saturday Night Fever."

NEW YORKER, B'way at 88th. (TR 4-9189)
"Ceddo."

OLYMPIA, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through March 7: "Saturday Night Fever."
From March 8: "Semi-Tough" and "Demon Seed."

REVIVAL HOUSES

(These theatres are showing revivals exclusively, and for abbreviated runs. For reasons of space, or lack of it, only the films marked with a dagger are described in our "In Brief" section, further along.)

BLEECKER ST. CINEMA, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
March 1: "The Passenger" (1975), directed by Michelangelo Antonioni, with Jack Nicholson and Maria Schneider; and "Blow-Up" (1966), directed by Michelangelo Antonioni, with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings.
March 2: "Bells Are Ringing" (1960), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Judy Holliday and Dean Martin; and "Two Weeks in Another Town" (1962), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Kirk Douglas, Edward G. Robinson, Cyd Charisse, Daliah Lavi, and George Hamilton.
March 3-4: "The Exterminating Angel" (1962), in Spanish, directed by Luis Buñuel, with Silvia Pinal; and "Tristana." (†)
March 5-6: "A Night at the Opera" (1935), directed by Sam Wood, with the Marx Brothers; and "Modern Times." (†)
March 7: "Bwana Toshi" (1965), in Japanese, directed by Susumi Hani; and "Woman in the Dunes" (1964), in Japanese, directed by Hiroshi Teshigahara, with Eiji Okada.
March 8: "Claire's Knee" (1970), in French, directed by Eric Rohmer, with Jean-Claude Brialy and Beatrice Romand; and "Bed and Board" (1971), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Jean-Pierre Léaud and Claude Jade.
March 9: "The Sandpiper" (†) and "On a Clear Day You Can See Forever." (†)

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMA, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
March 1: "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" (1962), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Glenn Ford, Ingrid Thulin, and Charles Boyer; and "Two Weeks in Another Town" (1962), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Kirk Douglas, Edward G. Robinson, Cyd Charisse, Daliah Lavi, and George Hamilton.
March 2: "Broken Blossoms" (1919), directed by D. W. Griffith, with Lillian Gish, Donald Crisp, and Richard Barthelmess; and "The Bitter Tea of General Yen" (1933), directed by Frank Capra, with Barbara Stanwyck, Nils Asther, Gavin Gordon, and Walter Connolly.
March 3: "Rouge et Noir" (†) and "Senso." (†)
March 4: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972), in French and English, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci, with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider (X-rated); and "The Passenger" (1975), directed by Michelangelo Antonioni, with Jack Nicholson and Maria Schneider.
March 5: "Le Plaisir" (†) and "The Diary of a Chambermaid." (†)
March 6: "The Night of the Hunter" (1955), directed by Charles Laughton, with Robert Mitchum, Shelley Winters, Lillian Gish, James Gleason, and Evelyn Varden; and "Whistle Down the Wind." (†)
March 7: "The Courtship of Eddie's Father" (1963), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Glenn Ford, Shirley Jones, Ronny Howard, Stella Stevens, and Dina Merrill; and "The Sandpiper." (†)
March 8: "On a Clear Day You Can See Forever" (†) and "A Matter of Time." (†)
March 9: "Au Hasard, Balthazar" (1966), in French, directed by Robert Bresson; and "Mouchette." (†)

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through March 2: "Seven Beauties" (1976), in Italian, directed by Lina Wertmüller, with Giancarlo Giannini and Fernando Rey; and "Swept Away" (1975), in Italian, directed by Lina Wertmüller, with Giancarlo Giannini and Mariangela Melato.
March 3-4: "Female Trouble" (1975) and

"Multiple Maniacs" (1977), both films directed by John Waters.

March 5-6: "If . . ." (1969), directed by Lindsay Anderson, with Malcolm McDowell; and "Figures in a Landscape." (†)

March 7: "Sometime Sweet Susan" (1975) and "The Story of Joanna" (1975), both X-rated films.

March 8-9: "The Misfits" (1961), directed by John Huston, with Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe, and Montgomery Clift; and "The Stripper." (†)

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

March 1: "L'Avventura" (1959), in Italian, directed by Michelangelo Antonioni, with Monica Vitti and Gabriele Ferzetti; and "Kanal" (1956), in Polish, directed by Andrzej Wajda.

March 2-4: "La Dolce Vita" (1960), in Italian, directed by Federico Fellini, with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.

March 5-7: "King Kong" (1932), directed by Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack, with Fay Wray, Robert Armstrong, and Bruce Cabot; and "Son of Kong." (†)

From March 8: "Top Hat" (1935), directed by Mark Sandrich, with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire; and "Dance, Girl, Dance" (1940), directed by Dorothy Arzner, with Maureen O'Hara, Lucille Ball, and Louis Hayward.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Through March 2: "Sanjuro" (1963) and "Stray Dog" (1949), both films in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Toshiro Mifune.

March 3-4: "Silent Running" (†) and "The Incredible Shrinking Man." (†)

March 5-7: "The Reckless Moment" (1949), directed by Max Ophuls, with James Mason and Joan Bennett; and "Letter from an Unknown Woman" (1948), directed by Max Ophuls, with Joan Fontaine, Louis Jourdan, and Mady Christians.

From March 8: "A Doll's House" (1973), directed by Joseph Losey, with Jane Fonda, David Warner, Trevor Howard, Delphine Seyrig, and Edward Fox.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

March 1: "Lifeboat" (1944), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, John Hodiak, Canada Lee, and Henry Hull; and "Thunder Below" (1932), directed by Richard Wallace, with Tallulah Bankhead, Paul Lukas, Charles Bickford, and Eugene Palette.

March 2: "No Limit" (1931), directed by Frank Tuttle, with Clara Bow, Stuart Erwin, and Dixie Lee; and "Dangerous Curves" (1929), directed by Lothar Mendes, with Clara Bow and Richard Arlen.

March 3-4: "Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon" (1943) and "Dressed to Kill" (1946), two films in the Basil Rathbone-Nigel Bruce Holmes-Watson series, both directed by Roy William Neill.

March 5: "Brief Moment" (1933), directed by David Burton, with Carole Lombard, Gene Raymond, and Donald Cook; and "If You Could Only Cook." (†)

March 6: "Her Man" (1930), directed by Tay Garnett, with Helen Twelvetrees, Ricardo Cortez, Marjorie Rambeau, and Thelma Todd; and "Atlantic Adventure" (1935), directed by Lloyd Bacon, with Nancy Carroll, Lloyd Nolan, and Harry Langdon.

March 7: "Rain or Shine" (1930), directed by Frank Capra, with Joe Cook, Louise Fazenda, and Joan Peers; and "Carnival" (1935), directed by Walter Lang, with Jimmy Durante, Sally Eilers, and Lee Tracy.

March 8: "Washington Merry-Go-Round" (1932), directed by James Cruze, with Lee Tracy and Constance Cummings; and "A Man's Castle." (†)

March 9: "This Is the Army" (†) and "Private Buckaroo." (†)

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium, Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—March 2 at 2:30: "La Question" (1977), in French, directed by Laurent Heynemann; English subtitles. . . . ¶ March 2 at 6: "The Exercise of Power" (1977), in French, directed by Philippe Galland; English subtitles. . . . ¶ March 2 at 8:30: "Spoiled Children" (1977), in French, directed by Bertrand Tavernier (who will be present); English subtitles. . . . ¶ March 3 at 2:30: "At Night All the Cats Are Gray" (1977), in French, directed by Gerard Zingg; English subtitles. . . . ¶ March 3 at 6: "For Clemence" (1977), in French, directed by Charles Belmont (who will be present); English subtitles. . . . ¶ March 4 at noon: A program of four Charlie Chaplin shorts—"The Pawnshop" (1916), "The Rink" (1916), "The Adventure" (1917), and "The Cure" (1917). . . . ¶ March 4 at 2:30: "Spoiled Children." . . . ¶ March 4 at 5: "Angela Davis: The Web" (1977), in French, directed by Jean-Daniel Simon (who will be present); English subtitles. . . . ¶ March 5 at noon: A program of four Charlie Chaplin shorts. . . . ¶ March 5 at 2:30: "Angela Davis: The Web." . . . ¶ March 5 at 5: "Trade Tattoo" (1937), directed by Len Lye; "Night Mail" (1936), directed by Basil Wright, Harry Watt, W. H. Auden, Benjamin Britten, and Alberto Cavalcanti; and "Every Day Except Christmas" (1957), directed by Lindsay Anderson. . . . ¶ March 6 at noon: "Arthur and Lillie" (1975), directed by Kristine Samuelson, Jon Else, and Steven Kovacs; and "Claire Falkenstein, Sculptor" (1977), directed by Jae Carmichael. . . . ¶ March 6 at 2:30: "Chinese Red" (1977), in French, directed by Jacques Richard; English subtitles. . . . ¶ March 6 at 6: "Winstanley" (1975), directed by Kevin Brownlow. . . . ¶ March 7 at noon: "Arthur and Lillie" and "Claire Falkenstein." . . . ¶ March 7 at 2:30: "Chinese Red." . . . ¶ March 7 at 6: "How Yukong Moved the Mountains: In a Woman, A Family" (1973-75), in Chinese, with English voiceover, directed by Joris Ivens and Marceline Loridan, the fourth section of a twelve-part documentary on life in the People's Republic of China. . . . ¶ March 9 at 2:30: Two programs of new French short films, with English subtitles. . . . ¶ March 9 at 6: "La Question." . . . ¶ March 9 at 8:30: "Closet Children" (1977), in French, directed by Benoit Jacquot (who will be present); English subtitles. (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—Through March 5: A program of short films by Vincent Grenier, Jim Jennings, Tim Kennedy, and David Wilson. Showings at noon, 1:30, 3, and 4:30. . . . ¶ Starting March 7: "Residual Regions" (1976-78), an installation by Francesc Torres. Continuous showings from noon to 5:45 (9 on Tuesday). Call desk (794-0630) for ticket information. Closed Mondays.

Anthology Film Archives, 80 Wooster St. (226-0010)—Programs by Riefenstahl, Smith, Sharits, Vertov, Vigo, and others. Showings March 1 at 7; March 2-3 at 7 and 9; March 4 at 2:30, 7, and 9; March 5 at 8; March 7 at 7 and 8:30; and March 8-9 at 7 and 9.

Film Forum, 15 Vandam St., three blocks south of Houston St., at Sixth Ave. (989-2994)—March 2-5: "Riddles of the Sphinx" (1977), directed by Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen. . . . ¶ Starting March 9: A program of six short documentaries under the title "Working." Showings Thursdays through Sundays at 7:45.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Annie Hall—Woody Allen's newest film—very funny, very close to his own bone. The hero, called Alvy Singer and played by Mr. Allen, is a skinny redhead whose anxieties are not small ones. His beguiling girl is played by Diane Keaton, for whom Mr. Allen has written a splendidly funny and loving part. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/25/77.) (Embassy 72nd St. . . . ¶ Columbia I; through March 7.)

Barbarella (1968)—The décor and effects in Roger Vadim's erotic comic strip are disappointing, but Jane Fonda has the skittish naughtiness of a teen-age voluptuary. She's the fresh, bouncy American girl triumphing by her innocence over a lewd, sadistic world of the future. David Hemmings shows unexpected comic talent as an absentminded revolutionary. (St. Marks Cinema; March 3-7.)

The Betsy—The director, Daniel Petrie, aims low and misses his target—maybe through taste and halfheartedness as much as ineptitude. This adaptation of Harold Robbins' novel about three generations of a Detroit automobile dynasty lacks the juicy vulgarity of soul which Robbins requires—it's so tranquil it's like a reverie on the clichés of the genre. As the superabundantly sexed patriarch of the family, Laurence Olivier keeps on acting after everyone else has given up. He must be doing it for himself—for the sheer love of testing himself as an actor. His energy blasts through the film's largo style; it's a personal triumph. With Tommy Lee Jones, Robert Duvall, Katharine Ross, and Jane Alexander. (2/27/78) (Eastside Cinema, U.A. East, and Waverly.)

Blue Collar—The phenomenally successful young screenwriter Paul Schrader makes his début as a director with a script he wrote with his brother Leonard. It's about three Detroit auto workers (Richard Pryor, Yaphet Kotto, and Harvey Keitel) who rob their union headquarters; the destruction of their friendship as a result of the robbery is used to illustrate the you-can't-win thesis. Shot in an ominous, fatalistic style, the film says that the system grinds all workers down, that it destroys their humanity and their hopes. Schrader's jukebox Marxism carries the kind of cynical charge that encourages people in the audience to yell "Right on!" His hostile, melancholy tone unifies this amalgam of pilfered pieces of old pictures and ideologies, but he has imposed his personal depression on characters who, in dramatic terms, haven't earned it. The picture seems dogged, though it is graced with a beautiful performance by Kotto and an unusual one by Pryor, who plays a turncoat. (2/27/28) (Trans-Lux East, and 86th St. East.)

Blue Country—With Brigitte Fossey, Jacques Serres, and Ginette Garcin; directed by Jean-Charles Tacchella. In French. (68th St. Playhouse.)

The Boys in Company C—With Stan Shaw, Michael Lembeck, James Canning, Craig Wasson, and Andrew Stevens; directed by Sidney J. Furie. (Loews Orpheum. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; through March 4.)

Ceddo—Directed by Ousmane Sembène. In Wolof. (New Yorker.)

Céline and Julie Go Boating—With Juliet Berto and Dominique Labourier, directed by Jacques Rivette. In French. (Cinema Studio; March 1.)

The Children of Theatre Street—An American production team gets behind the scenes at Leningrad's historic ballet school (on Theatre Street), and then loses sight of its subject—the way the pupils are trained to become dancers. Colorful sidelights and some good performance shots of young dancers and old ballets, but, by and large, a wasted opportunity. (Quad Cinema.)

Close Encounters of the Third Kind—This celebration of the wonders up there in the skies is the best-humored of all technological-marvel fantasies. It has visionary magic, along with a love of surprises and a skeptical, let's-try-it-on spirit. Written and directed by Steven Spielberg. (11/28/77) (Ziegfeld.)

Coma—Geneviève Bujold as a surgical resident in a Boston hospital. She discovers that large numbers of young healthy patients have gone into irreversible comas while undergoing minor surgery, and then—vegetablized—have been packed off to a facility that provides long-term life-support systems. The story glides along smoothly, as if computer-operated, but it doesn't give you a lift. Michael Crichton directed. With Michael Douglas, Richard Widmark, Rip Torn, and Elizabeth Ashley. (2/6/78) (Plaza. . . . ¶ Murray Hill; through March 4. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; starting March 5.)

Coming Home—Allowing for the differences in the wars, this may be the post-Vietnam equivalent of the post-Second World War movie "The Best Years of Our Lives," which also dealt with returning veterans in smooth, popular terms. Throughout, there's a strong element of self-admiration in the film's anti-Vietnam attitude. The time is 1968; the place

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

is Los Angeles. Jane Fonda plays the proper, repressed wife of a hawkish Marine captain (Bruce Dern); after her husband leaves for Vietnam she volunteers for work in the veterans hospital and meets a paraplegic (Jon Voight), who is in a rage of helplessness. Hal Ashby directed this intuitive yet amorphous movie, which falls apart when he resorts to melodramatic cross-cutting. (2/20/78) (Cinema I.)

Crossed Swords—With Oliver Reed, Raquel Welch, Mark Lester, Ernest Borgnine, George C. Scott, Rex Harrison, David Hemmings, and Charlton Heston; directed by Richard Fleischer. (Music Hall; starting March 2.)

Demon Seed—With Julie Christie and Fritz Weaver, directed by Donald Cammell. (Olympia; starting March 8.)

Dersu Uzala—A Soviet-Japanese co-production, directed by Akira Kurosawa. In Russian. (Baronet; through March 2.)

The Diary of a Chambermaid (1945)—Jean Renoir parodies historical romances in this wildly improbable divertissement. Chambermaid Paulette Goddard loves gloomy master Hurd Hatfield, but his Freudianized mama, Judith Anderson, and a whole lot of other people get in the way. The screenplay is by Burgess Meredith from a novel by Octave Mirbeau; Meredith also contrived to find a part for himself, as a demented gent who eats his way through a rose garden. Francis Lederer, meant to be a menacing servant, is the most elegantly turned-out actor in the movie; probably he just couldn't resist looking his best. It's slightly crazy but highly entertaining. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 5.)

Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands—Directed by Bruno Barreto. In Portuguese. (Paris.)

The Duellists—An adaptation of Joseph Conrad's Napoleonic-period story "The Duel," about a cavalry officer's sudden flare-up of rage over a trifling, imagined insult by another officer, which grows into a private war. The hussars (Harvey Keitel and Keith Carradine) go on fighting for over fifteen years, and the origin of the quarrel becomes lost in legend. This English production—a first film by the director Ridley Scott—is consistently entertaining and eerily beautiful; its special quality is in its Géricault-like compositions. The mixed American and British cast includes Cristina Raines, Albert Finney, Alan Webb, Edward Fox, Diana Quick, Jenny Runacre, Robert Stephens, Tom Conti, and Meg Wynn Owen. (1/23/78) (Fine Arts.)

The End of the World in Our Usual Bed in a Night Full of Rain—Except for flashbacks, Lina Wertmüller's first film in English takes place during one very wet night. A Com-

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munist Italian journalist (Giancarlo Giannini) and a rich American feminist photojournalist (Candice Bergen) have been married ten years, and in all that time they've been having sexual intercourse only in the missionary position. On this night, she suggests that she'd like to try something else, and there's much dishevelment, hysteria, shrieking, and running out into the rain—and the marriage collapses. The entire film has a tutti-frutti romanticism, and parts of it rank with such classics of camp as "Youngblood Hawke" and "The Barefoot Contessa." (2/6/78) (Loews Tower East.)

Figures in a Landscape (1970)—With Robert Shaw and Malcolm McDowell, directed by Joseph Losey. Cryptic dialogue by Robert Shaw, sometimes abruptly witty, but the film literally *is* about mere figures in a mere landscape—one of those Everyman-and-nothing stories, heavy with intellectual intent but pretty light inside. (Cinema Village; March 5-6.)

Fingers—With Harvey Keitel, Tisa Farrow, and Jim Brown; directed by James Toback. (Cinema II; starting March 3.)

Furtivos—Directed by Jose Luis Borau. In Spanish. (Cinema Studio; starting March 7.)

The Goodbye Girl—The prolific Neil Simon is at it again; this time it's a tearful comedy with Marsha Mason and Richard Dreyfuss. She says gratuitously abrasive things to him, and he prisses his lips and tells her off. Herbert Ross directed. (1/16/78) (D. W. Griffith, R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2, and Loews 83rd Triplex.)

The Great Dictator (1940)—Chaplin plays a small-time Jewish barber and doubles as a mock Hitler called Hynkel, dictator of Tomania, who argues with Napaloni, dictator of Bacteria. The notion of a 1940 farce about Hitler and anti-Semitism works out much less queasily than it sounds. The famous sequence when Hynkel lies on his back and tosses around a balloon inscribed with a map of the world is a miracle of high-flying, mordant fun. But the last impassioned speech about peace and unity still wrecks everything that has gone before; Chaplin mawkish can always overrule Chaplin the innocent mime. (St. Marks Cinema; through March 2.)

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High Anxiety—Mel Brooks' rehash of some of Hitchcock's most famous thriller effects. This is a child's idea of satire—imitations, with a funny hat and a leer. There isn't a whisper of suspense, and there are few earned laughs; all Brooks does is let us know he has seen some of the same movies we have. With Madeline Kahn, Cloris Leachman, Harvey Korman, and Ron Carey. (1/9/78) (Sutton, and Cinema 3. . . . ¶ Paramount; through March 4.)

Homage to Chagall—The Colours of Love—A documentary, directed by Harry Rasky, with narration by James Mason. Joseph Wiseman is the voice of Marc Chagall. (Baronet; starting March 3.)

If You Could Only Cook (1935)—This eminently watchable romantic comedy has a neatly contrived thirties-style opening. An automobile engineer and tycoon (Herbert Marshall) becomes impatient with his board of directors and walks out on them. He goes to the park to cool off and meets a girl (Jean Arthur) who's perusing the want ads. She thinks that he's unemployed, too, and proposes that they hire out as cook and butler. There are some gracefully conceived sequences: the test on the use of garlic that she has to pass at the home of a gourmet (Leo Carrillo), a retired racketeer; the tycoon asking his own butler tricks of the butling trade. There are some silly melodramatic moments, but the film is remarkably good-natured and fresh. Jean Arthur brings out the best in Marshall—or maybe the director, William Seiter, livened him up. With Lionel Stander and cello-voiced Frieda Inescort. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 5.)

The Incredible Shrinking Man (1957)—Good horror picture for older children, and perfectly standable for parents. A healthy young American getting a tan on the beach is caught in a cloud of radioactive dust and shrinks in height an inch a week. (Thalia; March 3-4.)

Julia—Jane Fonda as Lillian Hellman, Jason Robards as Dashiell Hammett, and Vanessa Redgrave as Julia in the film version of Hellman's story about her smuggling bribe money into Nazi Germany, from her book of memoirs "Pentimento." Directed by Fred Zinnemann, from a script by Alvin Sargent, it has been made in conservative—classical humanist—style. The film's constraint is frustrating, because Jane Fonda has the power and invention to go further in the character. (10/10/77) (Trans-Lux 85th St., Quad Cinema, Festival, and Loews 83rd Triplex.)

Landscape After Battle—Directed by Andrzej Wajda. In Polish. (Cinema Studio; March 2-6.)

A Little Night Music—Based on the Stephen Sondheim musical, with Elizabeth Taylor, Diana Rigg, Len Cariou, Lesley-Anne Down, and Hermione Gingold. Directed by Harold Prince. (Columbia I; starting March 8.)

A Man's Castle (1933)—Spencer Tracy and the lovely, big-eyed Loretta Young in a Depression idyll about an independent-minded man who takes in a homeless waif and falls in love with her—one of Frank Borzage's heavily sentimental yet magically romantic movies. With Glenda Farrell, Marjorie Rambeau, Walter Connolly, Arthur Hohl, and Dickie Moore. The script is by Jo Swerling, the cinematography by Joseph August. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 8.)

A Matter of Time (1976)—The romantic story, taken from Maurice Druon's novel "Film of Memory," is about a peasant girl (Liza Minnelli) who gets a job as a maid in a Roman hotel. A contessa (Ingrid Bergman) who lives there was once a great demimondaine; she talks about her romantic adventures, and the maid visualizes herself living through the events. But the film has been mangled: the producers took it away from the director, Vincente Minnelli, shifted scenes around, cut others, and even added stock footage. The result exposes Liza Minnelli, in particular, to ridicule; however, though Ingrid Bergman's performance has no rhythm left, Bergman herself is assured enough to do much of the role in statuesque repose, and she has a glamour beyond anything she's had before onscreen. With Charles Boyer and Isabella Rossellini. (11/1/76) (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 8.)

Modern Times (1936)—Chaplin, in beautiful form. (St. Marks Cinema; through March 2. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; March 5-6.)

MOUCHETTE (1966)—Robert Bresson has made several films of such sobriety that while some people find them awesomely beautiful, other people find sitting through them like taking a whipping and watching every stroke coming. "Mouchette," from a Bernanos novel, is about a lonely, mistreated fourteen-year-old girl who commits suicide. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 9.)

ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE FOREVER (1970)—Barbra Streisand, fitfully alive, in a musical about reincarnation. A fey notion, gussied up with Cecil Beaton gowns and Vincente Minnelli staging, and weighed down by Alan Jay Lerner's atrocious script. With Yves Montand at his worst. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 8. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; March 9.)

THE ONE AND ONLY—With Henry Winkler and Kim Darby, directed by Carl Reiner. (34th St. East, and Loews Ciné.)

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT—About the July, 1976, Israeli rescue at Entebbe. Directed by Menahem Golan. (Guild.)

PADRE PADRONE—The Taviani brothers' film version of Gavino Ledda's 1974 autobiography fuses political commitment and artistic commitment into stylized passion. Ledda's story is about how he was enslaved as a child, imprisoned in a sheepfold, and forced to tend the family flock, and of how he fought his way out of the isolation and silence. The spirit of the film isn't naturalistic—it's animistic—and the Tavianis' technique is deliberately barbaric. The grotesquely natural cruelty is mythological—almost rhapsodic. In Italian. (10/3/77) (Cinema II; through March 2.)

LE PLAISIR (1952)—This Max Ophuls omnibus film, based on three de Maupassant stories, sounds better than it is; the stories allow him to display his virtuoso technique, but two of the three turn out too thin and hokey. The first, "The Mask," famous for the Palais de Danse sequence, is about a man trying to retain the illusion of youth; Gaby Morlay and Claude Dauphin are in it. "The Model" is about an artist (Daniel Gélin) who quarrels with his mistress-model (Simone Simon). The most satisfying, "The House of Madame Tellier," is about the temporary closing of a brothel. The madame (Madeleine Renaud) and her girls go to the country to attend the first Communion of the madame's niece; the cast includes Jean Gabin, Danielle Darrieux, Pierre Brasseur, Ginette Leclerc, Mila Parély, and Louis Seigneur. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 5.)

PRIVATE BUCKAROO (1942)—The Andrews Sisters sing "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree with Anyone Else but Me" and a batch of less well-remembered songs in a musical comedy directed by Edward Cline for Universal. With Joe E. Lewis and Dick Foran. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 9.)

ROUGE ET NOIR (1954)—Stendhal's spirit doesn't quite come through; the ironic romanticism lacks dash, despite Claude Autant-Lara's fidelity and taste. Gérard Philipe is the proud opportunist Julien Sorel—analytic and calculating in his priestly cassock. Also with Danielle Darrieux as Madame de Rênal, and Antonella Lualdi as Mathilde de la Mole. The soft, pretty color is more delicate than seems right for Stendhal. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 3.)

THE SANDPIPER (1965)—At the time it was released, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, who had been the world's most highly publicized scandalous lovers during the making of "Cleopatra" only a couple of years before, had finally got married, and as Burton, looking more foreshortened than ever, eyed the portly Taylor in her Irene Sharaff poncho, and they delivered such lines as "I never knew what love was before" and "I've lost all my sense of sin," the people in the theatres could not contain themselves. The movie will probably never be quite as hilarious again, but it's a classic, no matter when you see it. Burton, an Episcopal clergyman, makes high-toned literary remarks to beatnik-atheist-artist Taylor, such as "I can't dispel you from my thoughts," and then, when he hates himself in the morning, she reassures him with "Don't you realize that what happened between us is *good*?" At the last, the clergyman, redeemed by contact with the atheist spiritual values, casts off the temptations of wealth and worldly success and finds his simple faith again. If that isn't enough, there's Charles Bronson playing a sculptor (posing for him, Taylor demurely cups her breasts with her hands—though they seem inadequate to the task).

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Vincente Minnelli directed from a script by Dalton Trumbo and Michael Wilson. With Eva Marie Saint as the clergyman's wife; she says bright things like "Thinking is a kind of prayer, isn't it?" (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 7. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; March 9.)

Saturday Night Fever—How the financially pinched seventies generation that grew up on TV attempts to find its own forms of beauty and release. John Travolta plays Tony, a nineteen-year-old Italian Catholic who works selling paint in a hardware store in Brooklyn's Bay Ridge; on Saturday nights, he's off to the local disco dream palace, where he's the champion dancer. Karen Lynn Gorney plays opposite Travolta as Stephanie, who is trying to climb out of Brooklyn and onto Manhattan, which is seen as the magic isle of opportunity—not ironically but with the old Gershwin spirit. John Badham directed. (12/26/77) (Art, Gramercy, and Loews 83rd Triplex. . . . ¶ 72nd Street East, and Olympia; through March 7.)

The Savage Is Loose (1974)—George C. Scott, Trish Van Devere, and John David Carson, as their son, are shipwrecked on a jungle island, and so is the audience. Agonizing. Scott directed. (59th St. East.)

Sebastiane—Directed by Derek Jarman and Paul Humfress. In Latin. (Quad Cinema.)

Semi-Tough—Starting from Dan Jenkins' popular 1972 novel, an anecdotal burlesque about professional football players, the director Michael Ritchie and the screenwriter Walter Bernstein made a movie that's a loose series of riffs on the human-potential, consciousness-raising movement, with the two football stars (Burt Reynolds and Kris Kristofferson) involved in a romantic comedy triangle with the team owner's daughter (Jill Clayburgh). The movie is like a low-grade fever—you slip in and out of it painlessly. (12/12/77) (72nd Street East, Playboy, and Olympia; starting March 8.)

Senso (1955)—Luchino Visconti on the Risorgimento. Farley Granger gives a wet performance in a part that Visconti wanted Marlon Brando to play, but Alida Valli has languorous splendor, and the intellectual spread of the film is very fine. In Italian. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 3.)

The Serpent's Egg—Set in Berlin in 1923, this Ingmar Bergman film, made in English in Munich, is about a Jewish-American trapeze artist (David Carradine) and his sister-in-law (Liv Ullmann), who are entrapped by a mad doctor (Heinz Bennent)—a prophet who dreams of what the Nazis will accomplish in the thirties. The movie, which fills the screen with images of fear and blood, of head-splitting pain and death, and then throws in gothic political theories, is a crackpot tragedy. Everything is strained, insufficient, underfelt. (1/30/78) (Coronet.)

Silent Running (1972)—A cheery robot film with the soul of an editorial, about a scientist (Bruce Dern) hipped on defoliation. He cruises around space in one of three conservationist spaceships that act as the last greenhouses of the Earthmen within. The robots aboard are sweet-natured, and they play a fine game of poker, but the film is a bit less entertaining and majestic than it promises to be. Directed by Douglas Trumbull, who worked on Kubrick's "2001." (Thalia; March 3-4.)

Son of Kong (1933)—Papa looked like a colossal, terrifying gorilla, but Sonny—a white gorilla—though big enough, is rather cuddly. The effects are still ingenious, but this sequel is disappointing. (Regency; March 5-7.)

The Stripper (1963)—This film adaptation of William Inge's "A Loss of Roses" has the dreary, liberal Freudian Sunday School neatness of second-rate serious drama; it's necessary for the characters to be shallow so that the audience can see them learning their little life's lessons and *changing*. Still, Joanne Woodward is at the center of this picture, and everything she does here is worth watching. Skinny and platinum blond, with an infantile, vulnerable manner and a bouncy walk, she's a small-town beauty queen who went off to Hollywood, failed, and is now passing through her home town with some seedy carnival entertainers—except that she gets stranded and stays on for the summer at the house where she once worked as a babysitter. The baby is now an eighteen-year-old (Richard Beymer), and she has an affair with him. It's the film's thesis that this affair causes her to grow up and learn to stand on her own two feet. Woodward doesn't do anything conventional; she gives the Marilyn Monroeish role a nervousness that cuts through its pathos. Even when the movie was first released, audiences were so familiar with the mechanics of homiletic writing that there was hooting each time the boy's mother (Claire Trevor) demonstrated her possessiveness. Directed by Franklin Schaffner (fresh from TV); the screenplay is by Meade Roberts. With Robert Webber, Gypsy Rose Lee, Louis Nye, and Michael J. Pollard. (Cinema Village; March 8-9.)

That Obscure Object of Desire—Luis Buñuel's style here is peerlessly urbane, but the film is a little monotonous. Fernando Rey plays a rich, worldly French widower of perhaps fifty, who loves a young Spanish girl; she alternates between promises and postponement—she teases him, fleeces him, enrages him. She is played by two actresses—Carole Bouquet, a tall French girl, and Angela Molina, a shorter, more rounded Spanish girl. This doubling-up stunt doesn't add any meaning: perhaps there's less than if there were a single actress who could capture our imaginations. In French. (12/19/77) (Columbia II.)

This Is the Army (1943)—The celebrated patriotic stage revue, with music by Irving Berlin, originally performed by enlisted men, was given a story line for the movie, and the cast was padded out with civilian screen actors and other notables. The plot spans two wars and features the curious, near-beer prophetic father-son pairing of George Murphy, as Jerry Jones, a First World War soldier who writes an Army show called "Yip, Yip, Yaphank," and Ronald Reagan, as Johnny Jones, who writes the Second World War show "This Is the Army." Having presented these fictitious authors, when it comes time for Irving Berlin to appear (as Irving Berlin) and sing "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," the film has the devil's own time explaining who *he* is. It's a huge two-hour musical that reeks of uplift, but there are a few funny lines, an impressive soldier chorus, and many tolerable, if wholesome, numbers. This is not the Army of "From Here to Eternity." Michael Curtiz directed; with Joe Louis, Kate Smith, George Tobias, Joan Leslie, Charles Butterworth, Gertrude Niesen, Frances Langford, Ruth Donnelly, Dolores Costello, Una Merkel, and, from the original cast, the tap-dancer Private James Cross and the singer Sergeant Robert Shanley. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 9.)

Tristana (1970)—Made by a master at the easy height of his powers. Buñuel's story is about possessiveness: a bearded, dandyish guardian (Fernando Rey) is dankly in love with his ward (Catherine Deneuve), whom he tries to keep caged but who gradually gains the power in the combat. In Spanish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; March 3-4.)

The Turning Point—A backstage-ballet milieu, with Anne Bancroft as a gallant, aging ballerina and Shirley MacLaine as her friend and rival, who quit to raise a family. The script is by Arthur Laurents, who writes sodden expository dialogue in which these two are forever revealing truths to each other. We get a glimpse of something great in the movie—Mikhail Baryshnikov dancing—and these two harpies out of the soaps block the view. Herbert Ross directed, unassertively and unexcitedly. With Leslie Browne, Tom Skerritt, Alexandra Danilova, Anthony Zerbe, and Martha Scott, and Suzanne Farrell, Peter Martins, and other dancers. (11/21/77) (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1, Quad Cinema, and Little Carnegie. . . . ¶ Beekman; through March 4.)

An Unmarried Woman—With Jill Clayburgh, Alan Bates, and Michael Murphy; directed by Paul Mazursky. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Murray Hill, Beekman, and Paramount; starting March 5.)

Whistle Down the Wind (1962)—Describable as "The Greengage Winter." Bryan Forbes made it, from a Mary Hayley Bell novel about a family of three motherless children in the dark North of England. Hayley Mills discovers their barn to be occupied by a bearded murderer on the run (Alan Bates), who understandably exclaims "Jesus Christ!" when he sees her and makes the dopey girl take this to be a piece of self-identification. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; March 6.)

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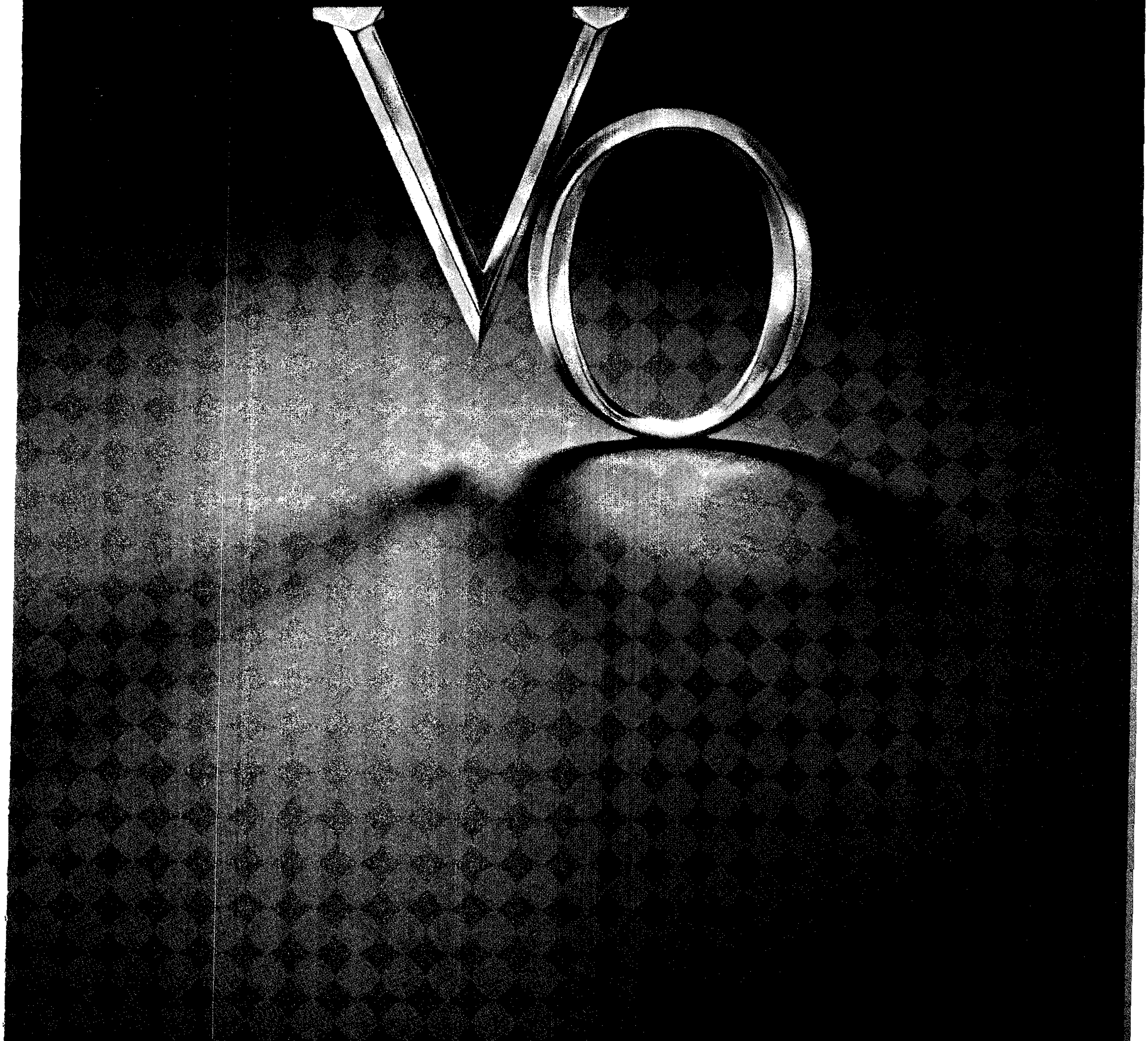

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

WHEN the Radio City Music Hall Corporation announced its plan recently to close down the Music Hall and mentioned that proposals have been made to replace it with a new hotel, some tennis courts, and new office space, the Show People's Committee to Save Radio City Music Hall, a group of activist citizens, immediately sprang into existence and set about appealing at various levels of the government for funds to keep the place going. One of the most striking justifications for making such an effort was suggested by Jack Kroll, the movie and drama critic of *Newsweek*, who argued for federal subsidization of the Hall. "The commercial aspects of the Music Hall operation shouldn't distract us from its unique and crucial role in the culture, indeed the consciousness, of the nation," Kroll wrote in an article that recently appeared on *Newsweek's* "My Turn" page. "To subsidize the Music Hall is to subsidize part of that consciousness." The idea that the nation should underwrite its consciousness with federal dollars is a new one.

An ecological approach to the problem recommends itself. Having recognized the importance of the natural environment, shall we let the mental environment go to ruin? The issue runs deeper than any questions of taste. The true ecologist of the national consciousness would not let mere aesthetic standards determine whether or not some beloved object—some building, theatre, or public square—should be saved, any more than the environmentalist lets aesthetics determine which species shall be saved. And, indeed, the test of aesthetics is one that the Music Hall, whose architecture, as Kroll points out, combines the Egyptian with the Martian, and thus manages to be simultaneously futuristic and passé, would probably fail. But time selects things for respect—the Eiffel Tower, the pyramids—that good taste would probably overlook, or even contemptuously dismiss. These things are simply and inexplicably *there*, like natural wonders. (In fact, it might not be a bad idea to turn the management of the Music Hall over to the National Park Service, which could show it to tourists in its off-hours as a sort of man-made, urban cave.) Inevitably, any inventory of the things that have stuck in a nation's collective mind is going to be odd and unpredictable, and in our nation's case it must include certain military uniforms (which keep turning up on the unlikeliest people), the grilles and tail fins of certain cars, and the movies of certain decades (the thirties and the forties) but not of other decades (the fifties and the sixties). Strange to say, however, it looks at this point as though our present decade—a virtual graveyard of original, spontaneous popular enthusiasms—might have very little to contribute. And that may explain a lot. There seems to be a tendency for things that, from the point of view of consciousness, are *something*, such as the Music Hall, to be driven out by things that are *nothing*, such as the new hotel, the tennis courts, and the office space. It may be a dread of spreading nothingness, rather than a love of what is beautiful, that makes the Show People's Committee to Save Radio City Music Hall and many other people unfriendly to things that are standardized, repeatable, and ubiquitous, and therefore leave no imprint on their minds, and makes them cherish with a new intensity things that, like Radio City Music Hall, are distinctive, unrepeatable, and rooted in their time and place, and are therefore hospitable to notice, affection, and a place in their memories—or, if you will, in the national consciousness.

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Pippo

ONE recent morning, we noticed an advertisement at the Forty-second Street station of the Sixth Avenue subway. The advertisement was for a beauty salon called Pippo of Rome. It said "WE MAKE EVERYONE LOOK THEIR BEST!" and "14 INTERNATIONALLY FAMOUS HAIRCUTTERS. ALL UNDER THE PERSONAL SUPERVISION OF PIPPO OF ROME." After peace and justice, there is nothing in the world we like more than for everyone to look his or her best, and, after some of Richard Pryor's jokes, there is almost nothing we find funnier than Internationally Famous Haircutters and any noun followed by the words "of Rome." Encountering the advertisement, therefore, impelled us to visit Pippo of Rome, which proved to be a unisex beauty salon. We met Pippo himself—Mr. Pippo Guastella—and thought he was great. He looked like pictures we remembered seeing some years ago of Carlo Ponti, the Italian film producer who is now married to Sophia Loren. Pippo was dressed in sky blue: pants, shirt, and sweater all exactly the same shade. He introduced us to some of the internationally known hairdressers. He told us that he had studied hairdressing in Rome and had worked there in a shop on the Via Veneto; that he had worked in Rome for a man called Frank the Neapolitan; that Cary Grant, Gregory Peck, Rosalind Russell, the President of Italy, and other famous people used to have their hair done at Frank the Neapolitan's place; that he himself had twice given Gregory Peck a haircut;

that he had come to New York because everybody comes to New York; that he had opened his first salon in New York in 1959 and by 1960 it had taken off; and that he changed the furniture in his salon every two years. The furniture that he now has is in the Chesterfield style.

Pippo then showed us an Italian men's magazine called UOMO. As he showed us pictures of snappily dressed men with precision-styled hair, he said, "In Italy, it's different from here. As you know, there is a lot of art over there, and this makes everybody—hairdressers, designers—very conscious of personality. When a customer comes in, you take everything into consideration. Face, personality—everything. I get all Italian magazines, because they keep me on top of things. In America, everybody wants to look the same. Same haircut, same clothes. But I give all my customers something different, to fit their personalities. I used to do the hair of Joe Franklin. You know, his face is puffed out like this!" Pippo made a face like a balloon, and then made a sound like air escaping from a balloon. "He would wear his hair flat on top, making him look even puffier. So I styled his hair so that he looks all slimmed down. He's a very nice man. Then, I do Barry Farber. He is more philosophic, and these philosophers don't take care of themselves. I first saw him as a judge in a Miss America pageant. He was wearing a nice suit and he looked nice, but his hair was a mess. Then, one day, I see him in the lobby of the WOR building and I tell him what I think of him, and since then he has been coming to me to do his hair. In other words, I brought out his personality. A long time ago, I styled the hair of Tony Lo Bianco, but then he went to Hollywood. Now I style his brother John's hair."

We watched Pippo wash and style a man's hair. He had introduced the man to us as a special and long-standing customer. Pippo washed the man's hair once with a shampoo called Superstar Professional Shampoo. Then he cut the hair by dividing it up into very small sections and cutting off a half inch or so. Then he massaged the man's scalp, fluffed up his hair, and trained some hair-drying lamps on it. After Pippo was done, the man looked just like a celebrity on local television.

Skytrain

"IT wasn't just the food aspect of Skytrain I liked. I found the whole atmosphere and all the people sympathetic." A young Englishwoman we know, who often travels between New York and her native land, was telling us about her latest trip, made to London and back by way of Freddie Laker's airline. "The sort of luggage people had, for instance," she said. "There were a lot of those rainbow-colored backpack things, of course, and a few pairs of skis. But there were also piles of the sort of shabby, ordinary-looking, hand-me-down suitcases that ordinary English people take on trains. There wasn't any Vuitton stuff or a matching set of anything in sight. I found it all rather comforting, because most people would call *my* luggage a disgrace. I have a weird assortment of awful-looking old bags. I have one I bought in Korvettes, with a stain from where a jar of marmalade burst. I have one from the British Home Stores, and it has a temperamental hinge, but I sometimes use it anyway and tie it up with string. I have a prim little leatherette thing that was my mother's when she was a private nurse, before the war. Some combination of my luggage is always exactly right for whatever bundles I happen to be shunting from A to B. I usually don't take many clothes, because I have those at either end, but I always have masses of queer, untouristy things, like half-eaten Christmas cakes, old doorknobs, packets of seeds, and half a dozen jars of heather honey from my Uncle Willie's bees. I am scrupulously honest, and on my customs-declaration form I write down absolutely everything I've acquired. The men are usually so taken aback by the list that they don't even bother to open my bags."

As one whose bags and souvenirs are invariably subject to rough and suspicious search in customs, we suppressed an impulse to complain. Instead, we asked her to tell us about eating on Skytrain.

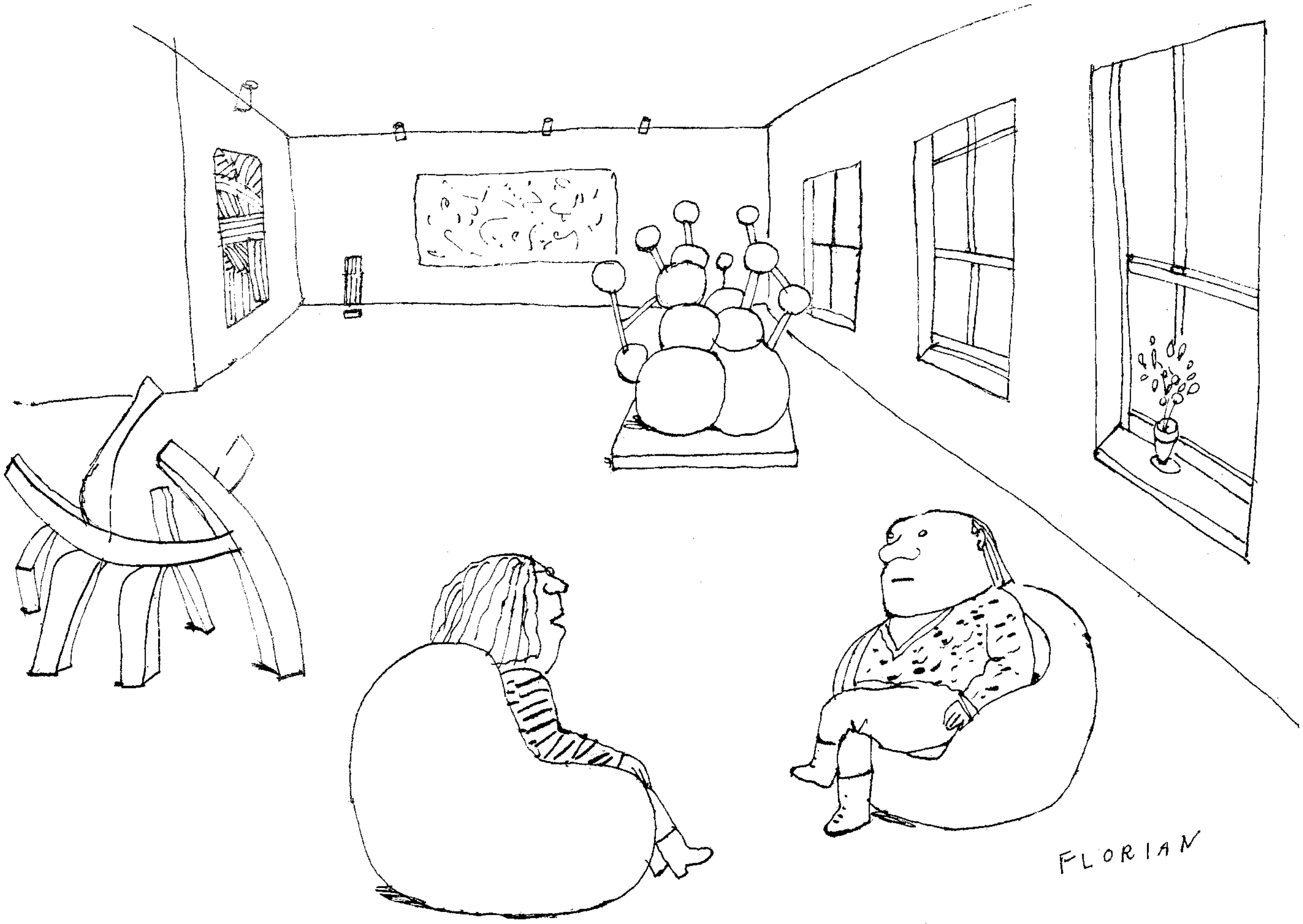
"The system is so liberating, once you've got the hang of it and make sure you take your own food," she said. "You know how tediously important sustenance can seem when you're flying the Atlantic, and how you're at the mercy of the stewardesses. You long for them to bring you a cocktail and then that rotten little plastic tray. And then you long even more for them to come and take away the debris afterward. You realize that it wasn't food or a drink you wanted, after all, but room to cross your legs and the feeling of being in charge of your own life."

Didn't they provide food at all on Skytrain, we asked.

"Yes, and I made the mistake of paying a few dollars extra for it when I booked my flight out of New York," she said. "They rang up my ticket on a huge cash register, then stapled on a little yellow card for a 'Cold Meal' and a little green one for 'Hot Breakfast.' But it was early in the morning, by my standards, when I booked, and sixteen hours before I would be eating on the plane that night. If I were the sort of person who could plan ahead properly, I wouldn't be so thrilled by the last-minute way you can set off on Skytrain. Another reason I didn't have my wits about me was that I was bowled over by being in the Laker office out in this amazing place called Rego Park. I mean, have *you* ever been to the heart of Queens? Everything's either in disguise or on wheels. Hamburger places like medieval castles, and launderettes in Tudor style. Miles and miles of drive-in this and drive-in that, and places to get your wheels aligned or your muffler fixed."

What was her opinion of Laker food?

"As it happened, I wasn't hungry when they served the first meal, because I'd just had a huge dinner with some friends," she said. "And I was too sleepy to bother with breakfast. So I never got round to holding up my little yellow and green cards. I thought the people who did looked a bit pathetic, somehow, like children in an orphanage. But I caught enough of a glimpse of the food that was given in exchange for the cards to admire the man across the aisle, who'd come prepared with a splendid-looking roast-beef sandwich and a bottle of good wine. He knew the ropes so well that he wouldn't even pay a quarter to get a cup of coffee. The stewardess pretended to be cross with him, and told him he ought to be loyal enough to want to make Freddie Laker rich, but you could tell she really thought he was smart. On my way back to New York, there were six young people who stood for most of the way huddled under a photograph of Maharaj Ji, meditating and chanting softly to a guitar. All they seemed to eat among them was a big bag of apples, but I thought that was taking



"Just give me some space, Milton."

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self-sufficiency too far. I had brought along a yogurt, some oranges, and a sandwich with brown bread I'd made myself. Eating them just when I felt like it was perfect bliss."

By now, we had become convinced enough of Skytrain's advantages to volunteer some depressing anecdotes about our own experiences on non-Laker flights.

"You know what I like most about Skytrain?" our friend asked. "Once and for all, it scotches the notion that flying the Atlantic—except, perhaps, on the Concorde or in first class—has anything to do with glamour. There hasn't been any glamour in it for years, actually, but some lingering idea of glamour clung to stewardesses and passengers and made them all a bit grumpy. It's all one class on Skytrain, so when you walk down that accordion-hose thing into the nose of the plane you don't pass through any first-class section and have a tantalizing glimpse of other people's glamour, either. As a matter of fact, when we boarded at Gatwick on our return we all had to walk across the tarmac and climb up an ordinary covered staircase. With me in the shuffling queue were sleeping babies and wide-awake grandmothers and rich-looking businessmen. There was a pair of white-blond Scandinavian lovers and a working-class lad from Newcastle with a tin of pale ale in his hand. There were the six apple-eaters, clutching the picture of their guru together with their boarding passes, and a very old, fervent-looking man in Chassidic garb. It was a black, foggy night, and there we all were, with our funny bundles and our sandwiches, filing up and up the stairs toward the lighted belly of the shining plane."

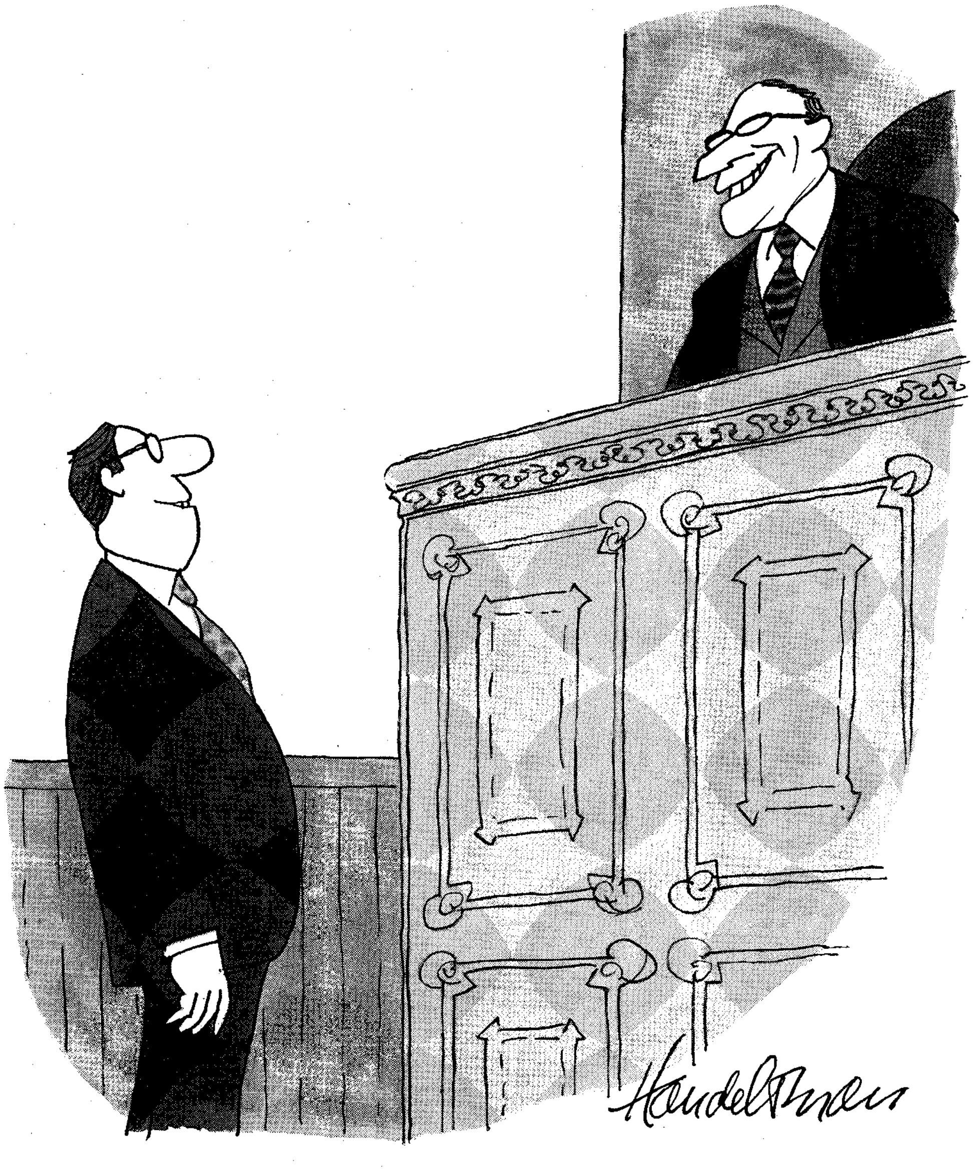
Faith

AS we were having breakfast at 6 A.M. in a seedy coffee shop on Amsterdam Avenue one snowy morning recently, staring half asleep into a mirrored display case full of venerable pies while our mind began, slowly, to clank and rattle and hiss, like an old radiator (but still no heat), the only other people at the counter were a small middle-aged man next to us and a counterman with his head on his arms (sleeping, we hoped; not totalled by the cuisine). Then an elderly woman in a vivacious blond wig bustled in, looked around at the customers in some nearby booths, looked at the man next to us, threw her purse on the counter, and plopped down two seats away from him. Fixing the man with a laser gaze (magnified by glasses), she began a non-stop rundown on love, loneliness, the loss of one's glasses, ambition, greed, snow removal, money, pride, crime in the subway, sleeping in hallways, the death of show-business stars, and the mysterious yet effective workings of the Lord. The man nodded, and ate, and she went on. She described how various celebrities had been brought to heel for their hubris, and how some of the humble—herself included—had been raised up. At the end of the lesson, she admitted that although she was extremely hungry for a thirty-five-cent bowl of soup, she was not going to worry about it, because the Lord would provide. At this point, the man said goodbye, and we watched him pay his check at the cash register. He left an extra dollar, and mumbled instructions to the cashier, who indicated a readiness to carry them out. Then, as the man pushed open the glass door to face the dark city and its snow, a very familiar voice shrieked cheerfully across the coffee shop, "*Thank you!*"

Delivery

A TYPICAL issue of *Back Stage*, the weekly show-biz trade paper, carries announcements of some eighty casting calls. The job possibilities run the gamut from fairly predictable (" 'A Chorus Line' will hold an open call for dancers who have not previously auditioned") to highly unlikely ("A final casting has been announced for 'Finding Rob's Feet,' a Grad NYU sync-sound film"). Eager job-seekers, upon presenting themselves for an audition, take care to emphasize that they are "very available" for work. A few weeks ago, Musicbox, Inc., a Brooklyn-based company that composes singing telegrams—called Musicgrams—and delivers them either by telephone or in person, ran an ad in *Back Stage* to announce auditions for a fresh crop of couriers. About thirty very available people answered the call.

The recipient of a telephone-delivered Musicgram on the occasion of, say, a birthday doesn't get a mere impersonal rendition of "Happy Birthday to You." Rather, he hears a totally original song (music and lyrics) written for the occasion by one of Musicbox's staff of composers or perhaps by Dean Foster, who, along with his wife, Sheryl Sims-Foster, owns Musicbox. When Mr. Foster isn't busy composing music and lyrics for Musicgrams, he profitably employs himself writing songs in the Barry Manilow/Paul Williams vein. "Those are separate and apart from Musicgrams," he explained to us the other day. "A Musicgram falls somewhere between a jingle and a song. We interview our customers. Let's say the customer tells us that he wants to send a get-well message to Aunt Sally, who just had an operation and happens to hate cabbage. We can easily fit surgery and cabbage into a song. It's not that much of a strain." A courier-delivered Musicgram ordinarily has only original lyrics, set to a standard tune, but it can be thrilling and spectacular nevertheless. The courier, whether male or female, arrives dressed in tuxedo, top hat, and white gloves, and offers a song with lyrics so shamelessly tortured that the United Nations might want to investigate. A Musicgram marriage proposal, for instance, might be sung to the tune of "Clementine" or "Old Smokey," and be punctuated by such sentiments as "Betsy, I'm warm for your form; I'm also enamored of your kneecaps." The company has been in business only three years, so there are not yet any definitive statistics on how many of these proposals result in lasting marriages.



"Well, this trial has provided us all with a lot of laughs, hasn't it? But, if I may be serious for a moment, I find you guilty as charged and sentence you to twenty years in the pen."

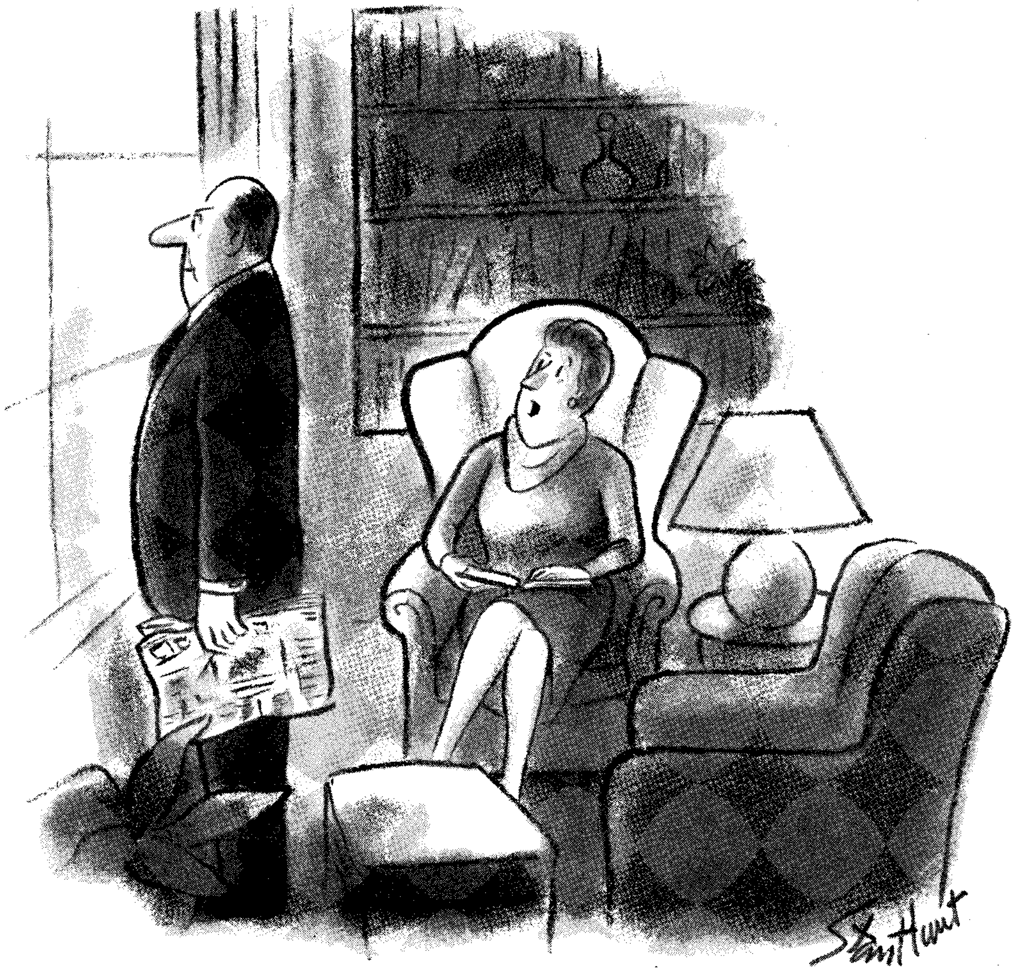
The auditions for the Musicgram couriers were held in a recording-company office on Broadway in the Fifties and were presided over by Sheryl Sims-Foster. Before settling down to work, she told us that business had been good lately and that she could envision "an army of tuxedoed people running all over the city someday." The prospective couriers who filed through the office during the next three hours included a few young men and women who appeared to harbor serious fantasies about singing "Lucia di Lammermoor" or "Otello" at the Met but, while waiting for that to happen, needed to earn a living. These people sounded out of their element singing Mrs. Sims-Foster's favorite audition tune, which is "Give My Regards to Broadway." A few other auditioners sounded out of their element just singing. Sheryl Sims-Foster was polite and patient with everyone. At the conclusion of each audition, she said, "We'll be letting you know in a few days. What's your schedule like?"

When she asked this question of John Deyle, a young actor and bass-baritone who had just serenaded her with a few bars of "Ol' Man River," he answered, "My schedule? Right now, I'm completely free. Very available."

"Well, that's good. You're an excellent singer," she said.

"Thanks," he said. "I wanna wear the top hat."

A couple of days later, John Deyle found out that he had been hired. A few days after that, having acquired



"And why, may I ask, do you want to address the Knesset?"

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his costume, he was ready to embark upon his first delivery—a birthday greeting in Sheepshead Bay, in Brooklyn. We had agreed to stop by for him at his apartment, a studio near Lincoln Center, and when we arrived he had just finished dressing. Before he put on his overcoat, he examined himself in a mirror. He is tall and solidly built, has a squarish face and a light-brown beard, wears glasses, and, when he speaks, sounds a good deal like Steve Allen. "*There*," he said, adjusting his bow tie. "If I fix my scarf correctly under my overcoat, I'll be able to hide the bow tie. Then, when I ride the subway to Brooklyn, I'll look like a waiter on my way to work, instead of like a clown." He pulled a pair of driving gloves over his white gloves, picked up a dance bag containing his top hat, and was ready to go.

As we made our way to Brooklyn on the train—actually, four trains and a bus, thanks to some unnecessarily complicated directions furnished by the Transit Authority—Deyle told us that he grew up in Rochester, New York; that he graduated from a college in North Carolina; that he had just finished playing the role of George in a production of "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" in Portland, Maine; that he hoped to get an Equity card soon; that he would be paid for his deliveries on a piecework basis and would not receive his accumulated pay until the end of the week; and that the money he had just spent to buy six subway tokens represented a considerable portion of his net worth. "At the moment, I have four dollars to my name," he said. "I had seven before I bought the tokens. Occasionally, when my funds get really low, I see a picture of myself in Times Square handing out those flyers for massage parlors—you know, the 'Check it out' routine. I've actually gone as far as to find out that that pays two-seventy-five an hour and you get paid at the end of each day. I'm not really worried, though, because something always comes along. Like this job. I think it's much better than waiting on tables or driving a cab."

The last of the four subway trains was approaching our stop now—Ocean Parkway and Brighton Beach Avenue—and Deyle began to consider whether his costume looked right. "The length of the jacket is really perfect," he said, "but in general the fit is awfully blousy. I like the wing collar on my shirt, though, and I've added a pair of my own cufflinks. Also, I'm wearing a red garter on my shirtsleeve. It's a good-luck charm from my girlfriend."

Following the bus ride and a ten-minute walk, we reached the destination—a high-rise apartment house. In the lobby, a teen-age girl was waiting for the elevator. She watched Deyle remove his overcoat and scarf, then flex his white-gloved hands. When she saw him bring out his top hat, she decided to use the stairs. "She's afraid to get into the elevator with a tuxedo," Deyle said. "I don't blame her." The elevator stopped at an upper floor, where Deyle got out and rang the doorbell of Kenneth Pukel, United States Customs Service employee, celebrant that day of Birthday No. 55, husband of Rhoda, father of Lisa and Cathy, and father-in-law of Sherm Bangel, who had ordered the Musicgram. A man answered the door, and Deyle announced, "I have a Musicgram for Kenneth Pukel." The man said he was Kenneth Pukel, whereupon Deyle, still standing in the hallway, proceeded to sing birthday greetings to the tune of the familiar "Give My Regards to Broadway." The lyrics mentioned Rhoda, Lisa, Cathy, Sherm, the family dogs (Brandy and Rufus), and the facts that Mr. Pukel plays a so-so game of tennis and always bones his fish meticulously. During the song, Sherm and Cathy took a lot of photographs. When Deyle had finished, he tipped his top hat and headed for the elevator, leaving Mr. Pukel looking puzzled and slightly stunned.

Deyle left the building and walked toward the bus stop. Along the way, he told us that he had to rush back to Manhattan for the second delivery of his new career—another birthday.

We asked him how he thought his début had gone.

"Not bad," he said. "I have to admit that I was pretty excited about it. It's like performing anywhere, although it seems superior to a dinner theatre I once worked at in New Jersey, where most of the audiences were made up of bridal-shower guests and bowling-league banqueters. This sort of thing has energy. You take the energy and convert it into excitement during the performance. Delivering a Musicgram is a lot like being onstage, I guess, except that you're standing in somebody's hallway."

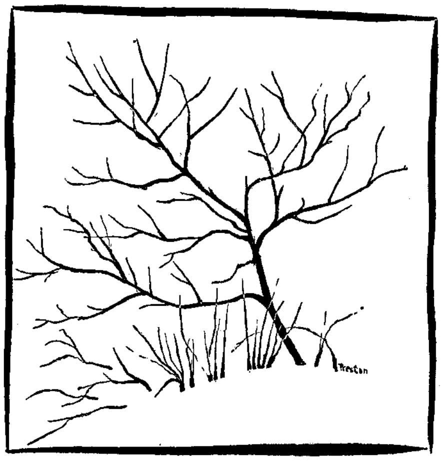
THE DILIBERTO TIMES

NO way you can't be aware of it, they had like a whole special on it the other night—the hat radios, the great-photos-from-*Life* vinyl siding, the flashing newsbriefs going round and round, even like at the Plaza now. Those stencils on Fifth Avenue saying "Watch Channel 5" and the bulletins creeping across Channel 5 saying "Use Fifth Avenue." Those "Your Message in This Space" stickers you see on people's foreheads, this new sausage they have out now that when you chew it at the right speed it plays easy-listening and commentary. The other day Floyd Kalber ran right up to me in the street, wanted to know was there anything I needed to get across, or anything I needed gotten across to me. Any other time, hey, listen, but you know ever since I had the alternative dental work I get WBAI in my sinuses—reception, you wouldn't believe the reception. Right that instant some group was overthrowing the station again, live, I didn't want to miss it, I just said, "Floyd, quickly. What you're looking for, we all need it: feedback. You and Tom and Jane and Gene and the guy, what's his name, who plays the doctor—what you're doing morning after morning, we're *with* you." Loved it. Thanked me personally from the whole "Today" crowd. Gave me a "Media, We Nedia" T-shirt to wear.

Because, you know, a lot of people take it all for granted. There's a theory out now, I heard the other night, the media anymore is like plumbing to people. But, hey, they're doing these media-deprivation studies: people forget the names of *pro*ducts, they're dis*ori*entated, *list*less, loss of *ap*petite, *hair* loses its sheen, extreme cases they even get these spontaneous involuntary hums. Pathetic.

But you know it works both ways. One of the impacts of cable TV, they say, you know, people are forming "Cable People" groups working to cut down on formula slickness in their own lives, and, an offshoot, they're promoting like just live people who are into things you'd never see on television. They just sit around on curbs and stoops and in parked cars, and I hear some of them are unreal. I mean, hey, guys in these sweaters and ties entirely out of soy products, and for two hours they rebut, like, Rosicrucianism. Beautiful!

And there's this aspect of it. They're working toward—the *inside access* available to the media, you know, extending it to the consumer. I mean, you get these expectations raised, right? Maybe you want them to go to *you* on the convention floor. So a big thing along those lines is this Quick Cuts outfit. You've like done a scene at your place and it worked, you know, nothing sensational but you'll take it, and O.K., O.K., now it's time to pick up the Debby Boone concert. But, O.K., hey, it's not televised. You've got to put on your parka and one of your gloves is missing you finally find it under something weird how the hell it's there you don't know don't care. Where your keys, make a long story they're in the freezing compartment, how the hell, oh yeah it's not even interesting, can't use the keys with thick gloves on, take them off, keys are freezing cold now, right, they been in the freezing compartment, right, you go out, triple-lock the door you've dropped a glove inside. Unlock unlock unlock open bend over pick up stand up shut lock lock lock you're finally out it's all ice on the stoop you could break your neck, six blocks through sludge and dogpiles, wait a couple lights, jump out the way a couple people running down the street with a hatchet or something, blah blah stand in line buy a token the woman selling them has this, like, *hatred*, three cops all they got to do is stare at you make sure you don't defraud the turnstile, they don't like you a lot either, blah *blah* blah *blah*, is it this train, is it that stop, where's the shuttle, this stairway, that line, dumde*dum*, announcement on the train "MWORWORMBLOR145th-StreetMMBLOR" but, O.K., say the subway don't experience a delay and you get out the other end eventually, you still got, now, at the Garden, where's your ticket, which gate, which ramp, which level, which color code, which section, which aisle, which seat, it's got some guy's wet sheepskin coat on it that's passed out next to you going "Uunngghhh." And that's like just the *high*lights, right? When what you want is—you're not into these dragged-out transitions. You want to establish, you know, you're leaving your place, and then cut, boom, you want to, boom, *be there man*, screaming at the music.



The only trouble, this Quick Cut thing, what they do they chloroform you at your place and take you to the concert and wake you up. And they're still working bugs out. Listen they used to *hit* you, on the *head*, but that got sticky, but even now with the chloroform, and now they got the dosage right, I hear, I mean still they had this guy on the news, this guy woke up in a swingers' retreat he was supposed to wake up in The Cloisters. Guy forgot his entire past, they had to Quick Cut him back to his old high school and his aunt's house and things to get him straight. Had to go all the way back to Indianapolis. Another thing, it's one more hassle for everybody else, squeezing past all these guys carrying unconscious people through the street.

Let's face it. Logistics. Always going to be with us. This other deal, I don't know, there's a story in *Time*, I guess, they were advertising it in between Tom Snyder last night, and this ad says what they're working on according to this story is the *New York Times* for the Individual.

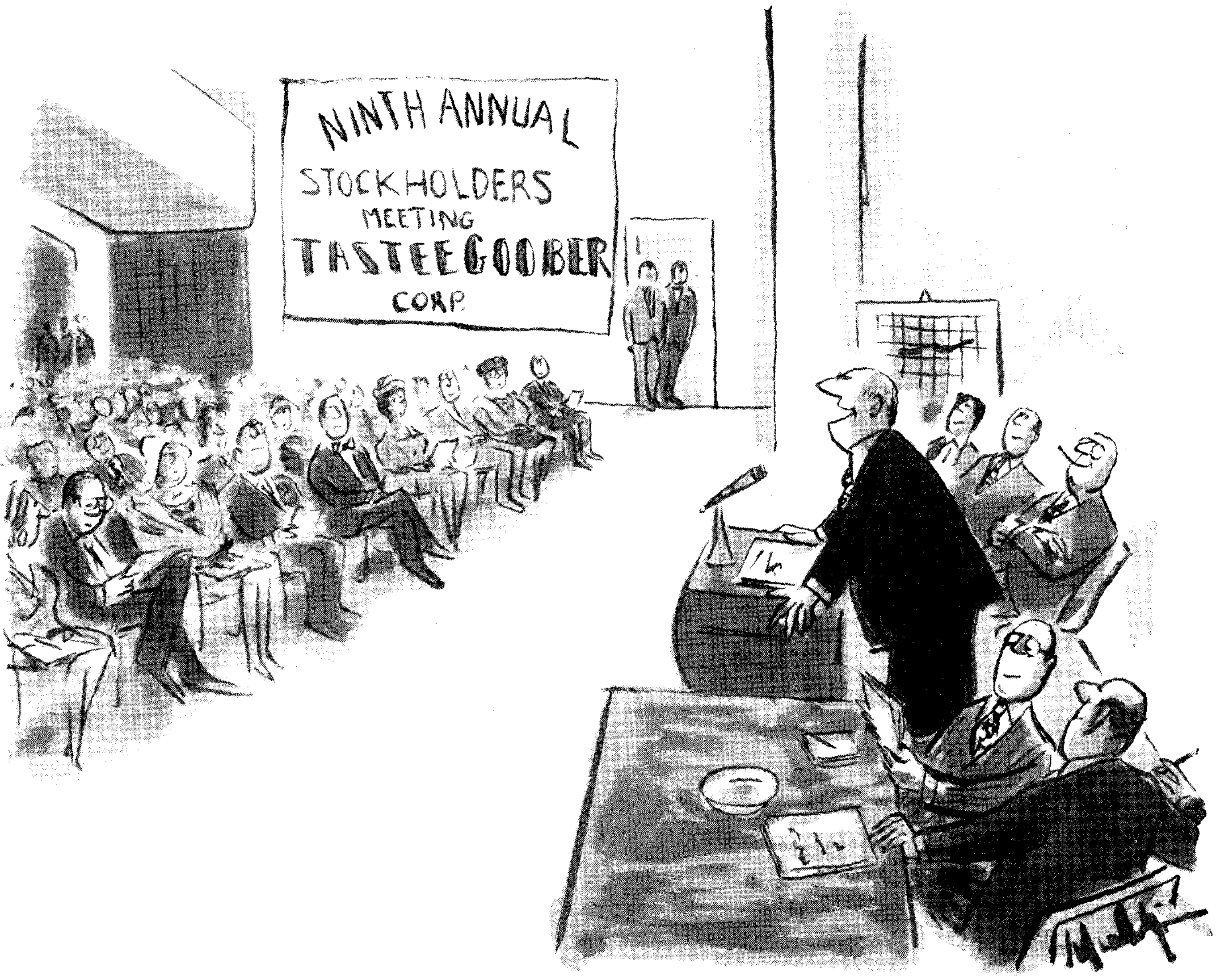
Yeah. Like, you're out really really late, right, next morning you get up, open your front door, and there's—like, your name is Phil DiLiberto—the *DiLiberto Times:*

YOU LOSE YOUR WALLET, $84;
AGREE TO WED POLICEWOMAN;
BATTERED CLERIC VOWS SUIT

REGRET FORESEEN

SERIES OF VERY BAD MOVES LINKED TO GREEN PILL, TEN DRAMBUIES

See? I mean maybe you say who needs it, but, hey, don't blame the press. And there's other stories and, well, an editorial page you don't have to read that, but on the Op-Ed balanced viewpoints on what you've been doing, what you'd better get started doing, and there's like a "Home" section geared to your own place, how it could be fixed up here and there, where the roaches may be hiding. Movie ads, only the ones you haven't been to yet. Sports, kind of nice a big three-column shot of you yelling remarks at Bob McAdoo won't play any defense, and, hey, in the cultural section reviews of



"And I'm happy to report that, despite what recent shifts in public opinion might seem to indicate, confidence in the peanut remains unshaken."

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stuff you been putting out. I mean, they don't give you Mimi Sheraton for some zucchini you did in a wok, but it's a place young critics can get started: "Your previous work in bookcases has shown a peculiar hesitancy, a sort of pedestrianism in imagined heavy traffic. It was as if you were so ridden by doubts as to where Phil DiLiberto was going in life to find and own so many books, and so haunted with fear that, once obtained, they might all shift suddenly some evening and come cascading down on you, that you were unable to take any real risks as to how the case might stand, itself. But now you have surprised us with this provocative new five-shelfer, which . . ."

The only problem, as far as general availability this personal *Times* it's going to cost you they estimate like around $2.4 million a year, even if the newsstand price goes as high as a dollar and anybody besides you ever buys a copy. There's offsetting deals you can get, a group called Freebienetics is working on this. What it is, you subscribe and get *all* the press screenings, the bio folders, the review copies, the fights with Norman Mailer, and you know passes to everything, but that can only go so far. I mean Warners is not going to fly everybody in the country, like two hundred mill, to the Bahamas for a media preview of their latest big one. And say, well unless Warners goes and plows that into a documentary of the junket, see, figure everybody wants to see themselves in the documentary. But then everybody can't expect to get into the *documentary* free. Probably cost you a couple grand just to get into the documentary.

Go back to the *DiLiberto Times*, a lot of people just want the reviews. You can plug into that. Say your plants are about to peak out and you want a notice. Or you explain something to your wife and you want to know how it went, whatever. And, for sure, you can clip out the blurbs and the service will like découpage them and you can hang them up. I hear now with some services you can specify if you want rave, mixed, whatever you want. But people know, I mean you get a lot more credibility out of a service that's got like objective standards. And listen it's a business for them, they're not going out of their way to pan like their clients. Hey I can already hear people, friends of mine, you listen to them, their service hates *everything*, it's out to get them, it's twisted, got terrible taste, it resents them for some reason, blah blah. But let's face it, some people just can't explain things to their wives.

—ROY BLOUNT, JR.

◆

I shall not review Burt's treatment of intelligence, which occupies most of the first 68% of the text.—*Julian C. Stanley in Contemporary Psychology.*

You mean like sixty-seven per cent?

I KNOW YOUR HEART, MARCO POLO

Hashid had tried to illustrate his point by telling Sam the story of a man who fell asleep, dreamed he was a butterfly, and, when he awoke, could not remember if he was a man who had dreamed he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming it was a man. As usual with Hashid, the connection between logic and metaphor remained vague. The story, however, Sam had understood, and as he walked back to work after lunch it seemed a truth that challenged his life. If he could not know which reality he should use to evaluate appearances, how could he ever make a decision? If he could not make decisions, he could not work. If he could not work, his family would starve. He sighed, switching his briefcase to his other hand and stopping to stare through the window of a travel agency. There, encased in afternoon light, hovered a miniature 727. Inside the airplane, miniature people ate from plastic trays, laughed with stewardesses, watched a movie. The details were good. Sam should know. He had spent weeks of his life on such airplanes. Tomorrow, in fact, he was supposed to fly to Washington, and the thought, like Hashid's story, upset Sam—not so much the thought of wasted hours in Washington as the thought of visiting his parents on Long Island. He looked at the travel poster of blond amazons running into the sea as if it were an orgy. I've got to stop drinking coffee, he thought, turning back to the street. His stomach burned. A woman in a green miniskirt bumped against his shoulder, apologized in Persian, hurried away. She could have been a secretary walking to work in Hartford or New Haven. There was nothing except her voice to suggest she was not American. How long, Sam wondered, before the whole world looks like Hartford? Thirteen years ago, stepping off the airplane into Baghdad's blinding summer heat, he had felt like an explorer. Today, in Teheran, he felt like a travelling executive. Everyone spoke English. Rooms were air-conditioned. But there were still some mysteries left: Persepolis, Shiraz. Sam crossed the street, walked through the compound gates and across the lawn. He opened the Embassy door. Charlie, the Marine guard on duty, rose and nodded. "Good afternoon, sir."

"Good afternoon, Charlie," Sam said, climbing the marble stairs.

Charlie looked like one of the statues Sam had once seen on the shore of the Caspian, statues of the first Aryans, tall and wide-shouldered, proud as veterans saluting the flag. Had Charlie been trained to stand so straight, smile so innocently? Sam walked past the bulletin boards and water coolers to his office. "Deputy Chief of Mission," read a brass plaque on his door. In the outer office, Sue Benson was sipping coffee and squinting at her typewriter. "Hi, Sam. This damn thing's broken again."

"Call the C.I.A.," he said, walking into his office, a large room with a bookshelf in the corner and a gray metal desk by the window. Some of the framed miniature paintings he collected were hanging on the white walls. The light was dim, almost green, diffused by the shutters covering the windows. He sat down at his desk. Sue brought him a cup of coffee. Her brown hair, cut short and tinted blond, swayed before her blue eyes. She brushed it away, smiling. Sam could not look at her. He lit a cigarette. "Is the typewriter really broken?"

"Kaput," Sue said. "I'll get Jimmy to fix it. Oh, and you're supposed to see Ambassador Anderson."

"When?"

"Now."

"What about?"

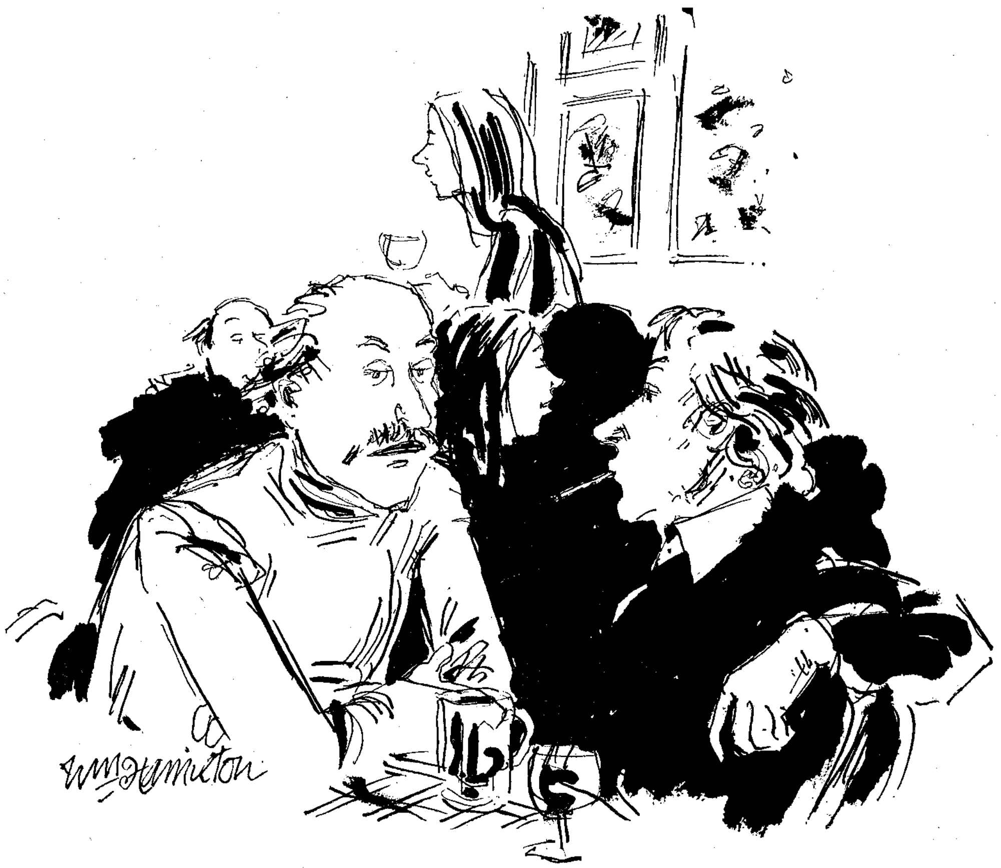
"I don't know."

"Anything else?"

"No. Yes." She stopped in the doorway. "It's your anniversary today."

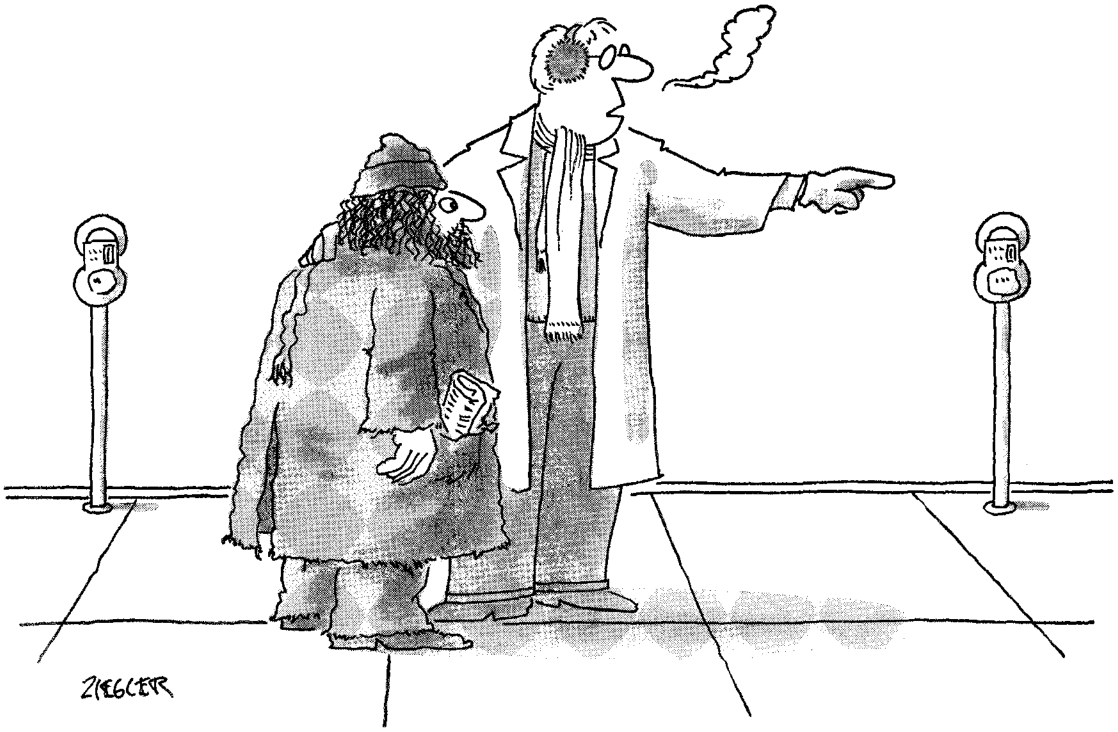
"Christ. Thank you."

She closed the door. Sam watched his cigarette smoke swirl through the slats of light. Why did Pericles want to see him? The coffee was thick and bitter. Knowing he shouldn't, Sam swallowed it with pleasure. How long had he been married to Laura? He sat back and counted the years. Twenty-seven. Impossible. He counted again. Yes, twenty-seven. He would soon be fifty. That too seemed impossible. Stubbing out his cigarette, Sam looked at the papers on his desk. Motes of dust danced between his eyes and the papers, ribbons of light unravelled toward his hands. He could not concentrate, he kept thinking about Sue. She had been his secretary, off and on, for fifteen years. Last night, after working late, he had driven her home. She invited him in for a drink. He accepted, and, several drinks later, led her to the bed and undressed her. They had not done this before. It was the first time that Sam had been unfaithful to Laura. This fact alone, he suspected, should have stupefied him. It didn't. The memory of Sue's apartment, its efficient, lonely simplicity—white shag rug, glass-



"Oh, I've got talent, all right, but I've never found anyone who could really exploit me."

topped table, beige couch, empty flower vases—depressed him. Sue was forty. Never, to his knowledge, had she been in love. He had seen her dating junior officers and Marine guards. They took her out to dinner or bowling at the Army club. She must have slept with some of them. A tall, skinny girl from Idaho, she had spent her working life devoted to her job, yet she did not, like most of the secretaries, exude a crisp, dry disdain for any passion except patriotism. Her body spoke of its own desires through her anonymous clothing as she crossed the room. Sam had not paid much attention before, to her or any other woman. Sex was something shared between husband and wife. Sex was embarrassing unless it wasn't just sex. Why, so late, did he suddenly want to sleep with her? It was compromising, self-destructive. He wished he knew himself better. He didn't think he loved Sue, but he could not be sure. His stomach turned over, sluggishly, like a dying engine. He imagined leaving Laura and felt he had killed her. Memory took her place. Something like passion, anguish, immediately stirred in him again, and he wanted her back. He stood abruptly, picked up his briefcase, and left his office. Sue looked up and smiled. "Good luck." He bent across her desk and kissed her. She tasted of toothpaste and coffee.



"No, I'm sorry, I don't have a dime to spare. I did, however, see one lying in the gutter not two blocks back."

• •

"YOU mustn't forget Quentin," Laura said, staring out from the terrace to the swimming pool, where Quentin and Matthew were lying in the sun. "He's so looked forward to your coming."

"I haven't forgotten him," Scobie said.

"You know what I mean. He wants to do things with you. You and Matthew are the returning idols, the older brothers home from college."

"Mom, he's only sixteen."

"And you're so old you can't remember what it was like to be sixteen?"

"No, I haven't forgotten."

"All right. Just be considerate, that's all. Promise?"

"Promise."

The heat pressing down through the striped awning above her head made Laura feel drowsy, thick-limbed. She sipped her iced tea and glanced at Scobie. He was watching his younger brothers, thoughtfully. The mustache he had started growing a few summers earlier had thickened and spread into a full beard. His long hair rose from his head in a chaotic cluster of curls. He was wearing bluejeans, a blue faded shirt, and blue espadrilles. Did he think that after graduating from college he could continue to wear such clothes? When she and Sam were that age, Sam had worn a coat and tie every day. Scobie and Matthew looked like gypsies. They knew it, too. "Scobie, tell me, what have you decided to write your thesis on?"

"Fitzgerald, I think."

"I used to read 'Tender Is the Night' once a year."

"Really? Do you know that when Fitzgerald was writing 'The Great Gatsby' he lived near Nana and Pa?"

"Yes."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"Mother, you're full of surprises. One of these days, I'm going to find that house."

Across the street, the soccer stadium erupted with clapping and whistling. Someone had scored a goal.

"Time for my nap," Laura said, standing. "What are you going to do this afternoon?"

"I don't know. Matthew and I were thinking of visiting Penelope."

"Penelope?"

"A girl we met on the airplane."

"Why don't you take Quentin with you?"

"We'll corrupt him, Mother. You have no idea what evil things we do when we're alone."

"I'd rather he were corrupted than lonely. So there. And don't forget, we're having people for dinner. Don't be late."

The front hallway was cool and dark, a long, tiled room that ran back to the stairs. On either side, more rooms swirled in shadow, the coolness trapped by closed shutters. Laura climbed the stairs to her bedroom, took off her clothes, and lay down on the sheets. She felt suddenly that she was someone else, or herself as she had once been, another woman lying beside her. She picked up "Messer Marco Polo" from the bedside table. Kathy Taylor had sent her the book, along with a letter saying her daughter Alice was soon to be married. Scobie had once been in love with Alice. Laura suspected that he was still in love with the memory of that first love. When Laura had told him about Alice he seemed genuinely shocked. "Alice? Married?" A look of bashful sorrow came into his eyes. Laura opened "Messer Marco Polo," but her mind was distracted by her sons laughing in the garden. The telephone rang. "Hello?"

"Laura."

It was Nick Sinclair, Sam's oldest friend. They had been roommates in college. Now Nick quietly managed the second-largest C.I.A. station in the world. The sound of his voice made Laura start to sweat under her arms. She could taste lunch at the back of her throat. "Hello, Nick."

"What are you doing?"

"Reading."

"I'd like to see you."

"Nick, I can't. I've got to get ready for this evening."

"Just for half an hour or something. We could have tea."

"When?"

"Around four. Is that all right?"

"Where?"

"I don't know. The Hilton?"

"O.K."

"Good. I'll see you at four."

"Nick, why?"

"I need to talk, Laura. I just need to talk."

Sam sat down next to Nick at the Ambassador's long mahogany table.

"Good afternoon," Pericles said.

He was about sixty, a bachelor, dressed in his usual synthetic gray suit and drip-dry shirt. A thick silver watch glinted on his freckled wrist. He was from Texas, a poor boy who had lived in a chicken coop during the Depression. Somehow, since then, he had made several million dollars in oil and real estate. He had been appointed Ambassador a week after the last Presidential election—one year ago. Sam and Nick had spent an entire lunch hour trying to guess how he had come by his name. Nick was wearing a white linen suit and a cotton shirt. His hair was red, and he spoke in a slow, measured voice that irritated Pericles because it sounded condescending. Nick's background—Andover and Harvard—had never entirely disappeared.

"So what's the story on this heroin business?" Pericles asked.

"The general is a seller," Nick said.

"Are you sure?"

"I'm sure."

"Can you prove it?"

"No. Not yet."

"Anyone else?"

"Sure. A few bankers. A minister or two. The oil people. And someone else, someone even bigger. I don't know who."

"Yet," Sam said. "But you will. Soon. Right?"

Nick shrugged. "Maybe."

DEVOTIONS

Think of the way she whistles each day at three
As she pours kerosene on her shadow,
How it leaps up, bright in the afternoon.

Remember the story of the Inca king
Who covered his body with gold dust before dawn,
Rowed to the lake's sacred center,
Awaited illumination.
As the sun struck him he dove
And rose up a naked man.

Consider what is in us
Without us.

—James Galvin

• •

"We can only pressure them," Pericles said. "Tell them we know and remind them of our arms aid, technical advice, and so on down the line." He clenched his small, fat hand on the table.

Sam said nothing.

Nick looked out the window, as if the proper response were floating in sunlight. "That won't do any good," he said. "I'm telling you, everyone's involved. A defense contract is nothing compared to what they can get selling heroin."

Through the window, Sam saw the gardener idly watering the lawn with a glistening black hose. An airplane buzzed overhead. Perhaps someone, as the airplane banked to climb higher, was looking through his round window at the roof of the Embassy. The city was silent, though the jails were crowded with students, poets, beggars, assassins, though the walls of the jails beat like hearts. Perhaps a poet was reading aloud in the darkness of his cell. Perhaps the other prisoners were listening, trying to remember why they were prisoners. Perhaps, outside the city, on the shore of a field, Hashid's father watched his grandchildren playing. Could he hear their piercing laughter? Behind them, did the tall trees wave their dark-green branches in the air? Did the complicated, coördinated shifting of shadows remind him of troops assembling in the desert? Perhaps he knew he would die before he completed his memoirs. History, his own life, had vanished. He knew it made no difference. His grandchildren looked like small white birds. "Fly away," he whispered. A truck backfired in the street. Sam jumped.

"Well, try," Pericles was saying. "It's our only hope."

"We can't touch them?" Nick asked.

"No." Pericles shook his head. "Regrettably."

"Hell," Nick muttered.

Sam had already been posted to Greece, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, and Egypt, but counting the countries could not convince him he had been there. Hashid was right. Dreams within dreams. What would happen to Hashid? A modest, intelligent man, a collector of Persian miniatures, husband and father—he could have been Sam. Powerless to use his knowledge about heroin trafficking, he had passed the information on to Nick, and now Nick too found himself powerless to use it. Failures within failures. Sam tried to listen to Pericles, but his mind kept wandering, to Laura, to Sue, to Scobie, Matthew, Quentin. It was summer vacation for his sons, a time to stop in empty streets and listen to music floating from open windows, a time to watch your father and mother try to be the parents they were when you were young and they took you to the beach. Maybe his sons would end up on the moon. An impossible possibility. Sam hated that kind of dialectic, but it was one of the things, part of the age, he had learned to appease with benign neglect.

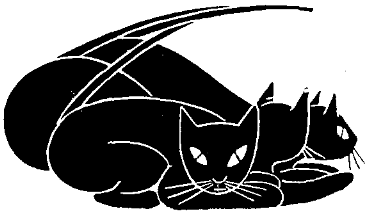
"I'll see you both tonight." Pericles stood. The meeting was apparently over.

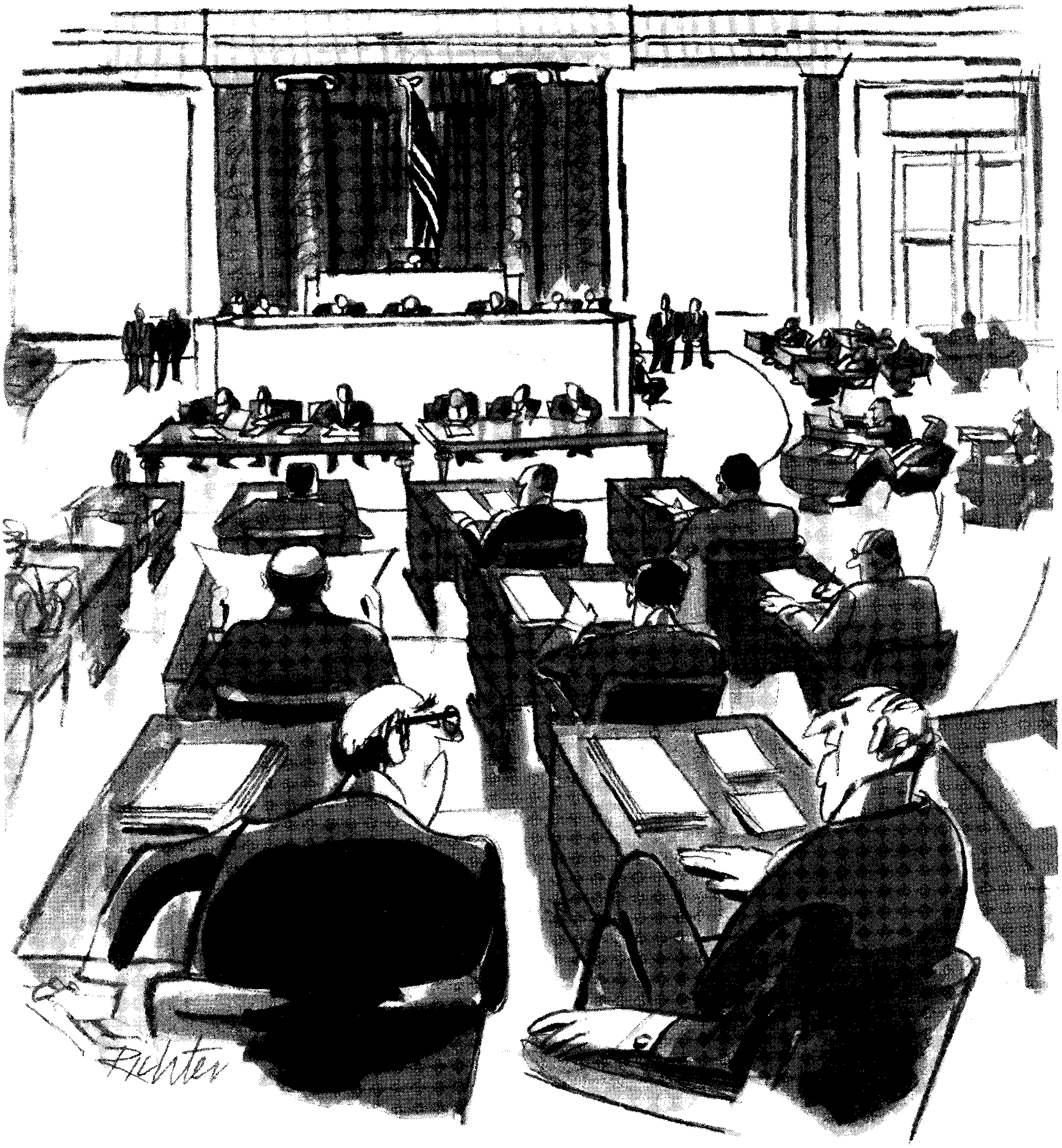
Outside, in the corridor, Nick touched Sam's arm and said, "One of these days, I'm going to quit." He was serious, his gray eyes angry.

"No, you won't," Sam said. "You're hooked. Just like me. What does Hashid say?"

"Nothing. He's scared."

"I don't blame him."





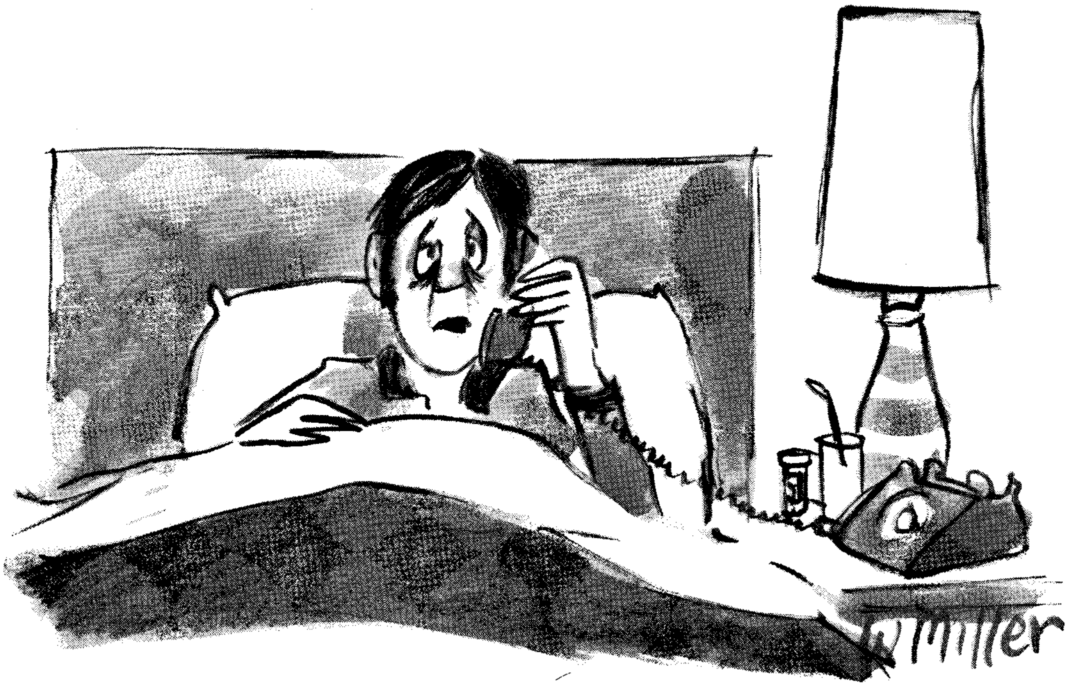
"I don't feel like it, that's why. Why don't you exercise your power?"

• •

"Nor do I. If I were him, I'd disappear."

"So would I," Sam said.

FROM his bedroom window at the back of the house, Quentin could see rows of artichokes reaching to the garden wall. Though he was too old to play with toy soldiers, the orderly beauty of imaginary wars continued to hold him. And his coins, worn thin as wafers by centuries of handling, would have told him, if only they could speak, what had really happened in history. Neither soldiers nor coins, however, could lift his present boredom. He sat down on his bed, leaned against the white wall, and stared through the window at the bare patch of sky, pale and smooth as porcelain. Matthew had gone alone to see Penelope. Scobie was in his room, reading or writing. Boredom was the wrong word, Quentin decided, lighting a forbidden cigarette and using an empty silver film container for an ashtray. He was not bored. He was frustrated. He knew what he wanted to do, he wanted to go to college, like Matthew and Scobie. Whatever they were doing there, it was more exciting than high school. Both his brothers had changed so much in the past few years. They seemed to share a secret language. They reminded Quentin of soldiers home from battle. Even their smiles were exclusive. Quentin heard the door to his parents' room opening. Pushing out his cigarette, he dropped the butt into the container, screwed on



"I've got a Saturday-night fever, but not *the* *Saturday Night Fever."*

the silver top, and carefully hid the container in his desk drawer. His own door was ajar. He saw his mother crossing the hallway toward the stairs. Something about the way she walked reminded him of someone. Himself, he realized. She was practically tiptoeing, furtive. Why? Where was she going? Quentin waited until she had descended the stairs. Then he moved quickly to her study, a small room with a window overlooking the front garden, the swimming pool, the street. He saw her hurrying across the garden and into the car, driving out through the gate, and disappearing down the street. The sight of the vanishing black Mercedes filled him with sadness.

"What's up?"

Jumping, Quentin turned and saw Scobie standing in the doorway.

"Just looking," he said.

"At what?" Scobie asked.

"Mom."

Scobie peered through the window. "Where?"

"She's gone. In the car."

"So?"

"She was acting funny."

"She's a funny person."

"No, I mean strange."

"She's a strange person."

"I think she's having an affair."

"Oh, come on, Quentin. Mother? An affair?"

"I've seen her sneaking out a couple of times this month."

"She's probably going to see her guru."

"I don't *think* so."

"Or shopping. Or visiting friends. Or driving around in circles."

"She acts like a kid sneaking out to smoke a cigarette."

Scobie laughed, running his fingers through his long hair. "Sherlock Richardson on the job. An affair, huh?"

"Do you think it's possible?" Quentin asked.

"I don't know. Sure, I guess it's possible. Everyone else has affairs. Why shouldn't our mother? On the other hand, you have a very active imagination. And I'm very suggestible. Let's go swimming."

Quentin returned to his room and put on his bathing suit. Scobie was waiting for him in the hallway. They walked down the stairs together. A fan turned slowly overhead. Outside, the sun was so bright Quentin had to squint. The garden lost its separate parts, became one color, one sound, one smell, not filtered and refined by his senses, not selected by his consciousness but absorbed by his body. A truck backfired in the street, the garden spun inward to shape, and he stepped off the terrace, across the grass, and dived into the pool. Cold water slapped him like a hand. As he surfaced, he felt the concussion of Scobie's dive behind him. The water rippled, slapped the side of the pool, and Scobie exploded in light. They hovered together, listening to the birds, the cars on the street beyond the high wall, the children in the garden next door. Looking up at the house, Quentin saw the window of his mother's study, the ghost of his own face staring down at the pool.

"Remember that game we used to play at the Taylors'?" Scobie asked. "Marco Polo. Do you remember?"

"Yes."

"Let's play. You're it."

Quentin closed his eyes and listened. He heard Scobie swimming to the other end of the pool. "Marco," Quentin said.

"Polo," Scobie replied, diving.

Quentin waited, listening. Then, to his left, he heard Scobie gasping and giggling. "Marco," Quentin called.

"Polo," Scobie said.

Quentin dived, his eyes still closed, toward the sound of Scobie's voice. He could feel Scobie swimming above him, twisted, reached for what he hoped would be an ankle, and came up empty-handed. "Marco!"

"Polo!"

Hearing Scobie inhale and dive, Quentin dropped straight down, his arms spread wide, and caught his brother by the shoulder. They both surfaced, laughing.

HASHID was waiting for Sam and Nick at a crowded coffeehouse inside the bazaar. They sat down next to him at a round brass table and accepted small white cups of sweet Turkish coffee. Hashid was a Muslim and received all friends, even unknown guests, with a gentle, ceremonious courtesy that made Sam feel obese. This afternoon, Hashid was silent, watching with melancholy eyes as they sipped their coffee, his dark, smooth face and darker, neatly trimmed mustache perfectly still, his hands cradling his own cup of coffee as if it were a bird's egg filled with fragile life. Finally he spoke. "Ambassador Anderson?"

Nick nodded. "We saw him. His orders are to lay off."

"You cannot interfere?"

"No."

"Investigate?"

"That wasn't mentioned." Nick smiled.

Hashid sadly shook his head. "We can do nothing."

"We can do a great deal," Nick said. "We have to be careful, that's all. Especially you, Hashid."

"What can I do?" Hashid lifted his hands, a frustrated shrug.

"Continue to gather information and pass it along to me." Nick's voice was a soft and soothing monotone. "And help me find some people to infiltrate. Low level. Runners. It doesn't matter. We need someone closer, someone who might see a face or hear a name."

"Perhaps."

"Slowly, Hashid. That's the only way. Slowly and carefully."

"I'll try."

"Look, our problem is simple," Nick said, folding his hands on the table. "Either we lay off or pursue the issue more or less on our own. What do you want to do?"

"Go ahead," Hashid said firmly.

"So do I," Nick said. "Sam?"

"Privately, you know I'm with you, Nick. But I can't have anything more to do with the operation. If I did, I'd have to lie to the Ambassador. And I can't do that. Should hell break loose, however, I'll do everything I can to support you."

"Fine."

Hashid spread his arms and smiled. "You are good men."

Nick grinned.

"Well, I must leave you now." Standing, Hashid shook their hands. "I'm flying to Isfahan."

"Business?"

"Always. Goodbye. Thank you."

Sam watched Hashid's small, lithe body disappear into the crowd.

Nick ordered more coffee. "He's taking chances."

"I know," Sam said. "Would you do what he's doing?"

"Yes."

Sam stared into the bazaar's twisting, penumbral alleys. They looked like rivers flowing toward darkness. On the cluttered shores, men in white kaffiyehs offered their wares: brass bells, carpets, spices, olivewood boxes inlaid with ivory, and coins, fruit, clothes, knives, clocks. High above the squatting, chattering hawkers, light penetrated holes in the black goatskins stretched across the top of the bazaar. Beams of sunlight and dust swirled, met, crossed or merged like searchlights. The discontinued past hummed in the bazaar, pure music.

Nick leaned toward Sam. "Ready?"

"You go on without me," Sam said. "I've got to try and find an anniversary present for Laura."

"Oh." Nick looked down at his hands. "O.K. See you later." He stepped lightly from the café, his white suit vanishing into the darkness.

Sam took a swallow of his coffee and grimaced. It was cold. He looked at his watch. Three-thirty. As he stood to leave, he felt a hand on his arm, turned, and saw a peeling face. It was a beggar, dressed in blue, his fingers plucking at Sam's sleeve. Sam quickly gave him some money and hurried away.

PENELOPE sat by the edge of her swimming pool, her ankles dangling in the water, her body leaning back on her hands, her face lifted up to the sun. Matthew called her name. She did not respond. He considered tapping her shoulder, but that seemed absurd, so he imagined he was on the terrace at home, with his mother, listening to the shouts in the stadium across the street. He dived into the water, swam over to her feet. Penelope smiled, her eyes closed, helpless before the intensity with which he could, for a moment, desire her. She was not stupid, but he knew he could, if he wished, convince her that even his lust would make her happy. She started talking about her college boyfriend. They had lived together for two years. "I got pregnant," she said. "I didn't want an abortion, Bob didn't want me to have an abortion, so I had a baby, a girl, and now I've got stretch marks—no, don't look. That's why I don't take off my shirt. I gave my baby away, Matthew. Can

you imagine? To a complete stranger. Our relationship immediately disintegrated. Bob's and mine, I mean. There was something about giving our baby away that killed our love. It made us hard inside. We used to lie together in bed, not touching. He'd tell me, 'Your breasts are beautiful.' But he never touched me. The son of a bitch. Matthew, it would make you sick to see my stretch marks. They're like scars."

She turned on the radio, her blunt fingers fiddling with the plastic dial, a sweep of her red hair hiding her eyes, her whole body bent, supplicant, before the invisible singer. Matthew climbed out of the pool and approached her, his feet leaving a path of evaporating footprints behind him.

"Do you ever dream of a perfectly happy life?" she asked, lighting a cigarette so awkwardly he realized his own guilt made her invulnerable.

"Yes." He sat down next to her on the hot cement.

"Why do we do that? It's so *dumb*."

Matthew laughed. "Would you like to take some acid?"

Penelope sat up and looked at him. "You have some? Here?"

"Yes."

"Wow." She glanced down, nervously, at her bitten fingernails. He stared at her soft skin, her freckles, her green eyes, her hair so red it seemed to be burning. Why did girls with red hair always seem to bite their fingernails? "O.K.," she said. "I haven't tripped since Bob and I broke up."

"Let's not if you don't want to," Matthew said.

"No, no, I want to," she insisted.

"You know, I can't stay much longer. I have to get back. Mom's having people for dinner. Maybe we should wait until we have more time."

"No, I'd like to trip now."

"O.K." Matthew reached into the pocket of his carefully folded bluejeans and pulled out a plastic bag. From the bag, he pulled two purple pills. He handed one to Penelope.

"I'll get water," she said.

"I'll come with you."

Following her toward the house, he saw himself in the plate-glass window growing larger, approaching himself. Penelope slid back the glass door and they stepped into a dim, carpeted living room cold with air-conditioning. She poured two glasses of iced tea in the kitchen and they swallowed their pills. Then they returned to the living room. "Want to hear some music?" Penelope asked.

"Sure."

She reached through the albums piled on the floor, picked one, and put it on a stereo that was hidden inside a squat Spanish cabinet. Matthew sat down, cross-legged. Penelope stretched out next to him, her hand covering her eyes, and sang along with the music. Beautiful rock and roll, Matthew thought. He could chart his life by rock and roll: the slow dance of childhood, the anxious, pantomimed jitterbug of adolescence, the psychedelic reveries of resistance. The first rock and roll he remembered was an Elvis Presley song Scobie's friend Larry used to sing, accompanying himself on a cracked guitar. "Love me tender, love me sweet." What ever happened to Larry, Matthew wondered.

"Damn," Penelope muttered.

"What?"

"I left my cigarettes outside."

Neither of them moved.

"Are you going to the fireworks tonight?" Matthew asked.

"Yes."

"Me too. Maybe I'll see you there."

"That would be nice."

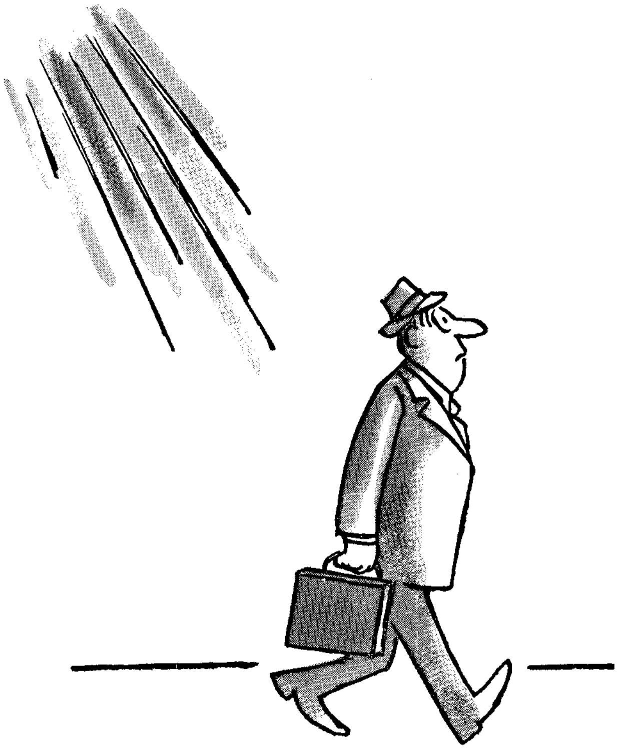
"Have you started to get a buzz yet?"

"I think so. Have you?"

"Yeah, a little. What's the record?"

"I don't know." Penelope giggled. "I can't remember."

STEPPING off the hot street into the garden, Sam relaxed, he breathed deeply. He felt he was home. Trees and flowers surrounded the small swimming pool. Next door, beyond the high wall, children were playing beneath the pines. Shouts and applause, a deep, rumbling murmur floated from the soccer stadium and across the garden. He walked upstairs to the cool, dark bedroom, took off his clothes, and lay down for an hour. Downstairs, Laura was giving last-minute dinner instructions to the cook. Or she was in her small room off the hallway, wearing a bathrobe, sipping tea and writing in her journal. The noise of the city receded behind the garden wall. Sam slept, rose refreshed, and showered. Dressing, he stared at his face in the mirror. It looked gray, ashen, dry as paper. He hadn't taken a vacation in years. His body had started to sag toward his belly. I should quit, he thought. Get out while I'm still capable of doing something. He had seen too many friends retire to fear and uselessness. They had waited too long, hoping for a final glory, one last important assignment. They had waited because they didn't know what else to do, where to go, why. Sam carefully knotted his tie, feeling himself twenty-seven years earlier standing beside him, also knotting his tie as he prepared to meet Laura for dinner and ask her to marry him. Twenty-seven years. With half his heart, he wanted to leave Laura, start over again, feel some passion in his life. Sue desired him, that was the difference between her and Laura, and he desired Sue, the release he had shared with her last night. Dark spots of sweat dampened his clean white shirt. He turned away from the mirror, pulling his green-and-black checked jacket from the closet and walking into the bedroom. Laura was sitting on the bed in her slip, reading. She was so absorbed she didn't hear him enter the room. He stood and watched her. My life, he thought. Twenty-seven years. He couldn't even remember falling in love with her. Hashid was right. You wake from one dream into another. A sense of grace, what Sam called beauty, was all that existed to suggest reality. He



"Malcolm J. Thawley!"

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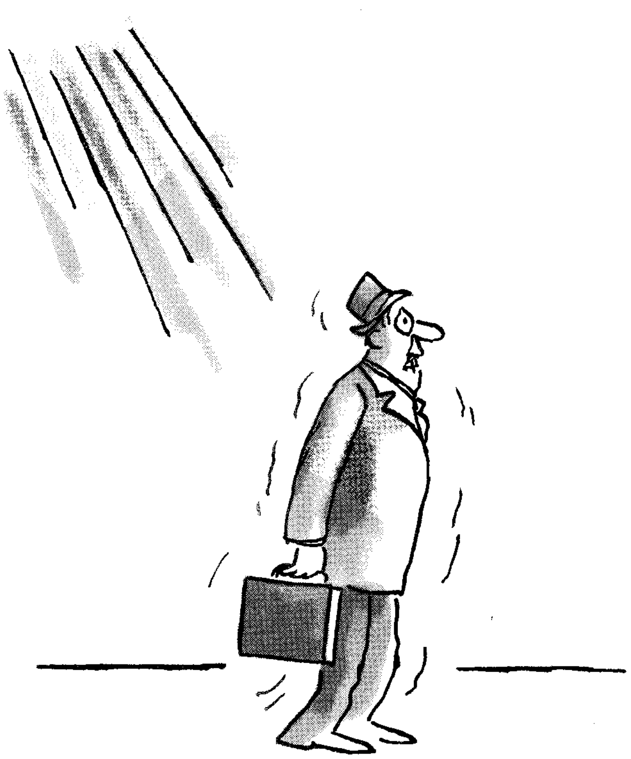
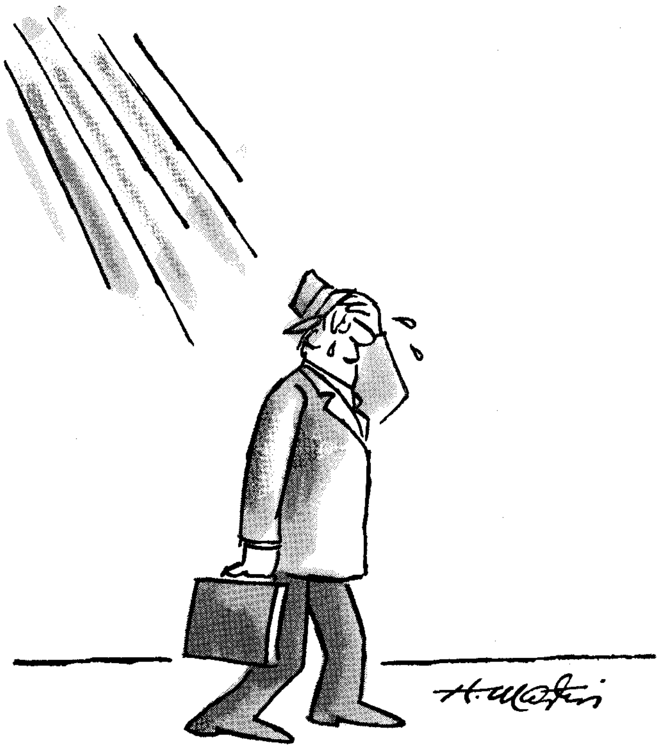


"This is the Lord speaking!"



"Have a nice day!"

had stopped painting seriously the day he realized he did not have the talent to capture it, reveal it. But maybe he should try again. Maybe he had given up too easily. "Laura?"

She looked up from her book. "Hello, darling. Am I late? Sam, what's wrong?"

"Nothing. Tired."

"You're pale as a ghost."

"That's what I feel like today."

"What's wrong with you?"

"Nothing."

"There's no need to use that tone of voice with me, Sam Richardson." She closed her book, stood, walked to her closet. "We've all got problems."

"What are your problems?" he asked.

"At the moment, you." Her back was to him as she searched for a dress. "You're freaked out, as the boys would say. You're frightened and you won't admit it."

"Goddammit, Laura, you're talking like your goddam guru."

"You've never met my goddam guru."

"I'm going to get a drink. Want one?"

"We never even fight anymore."

He stopped in the doorway. "What did you say?"

"I said, 'We never even fight anymore.' " She was facing him now, boldly.

"Jesus Christ, woman, if we fought I'd leave you bleeding."

He almost ran down the stairs. The front door was open, and he could see the setting sun reflected in the swimming pool. He walked into his study, sat down at the desk, and peered at his half-finished model airplane. He lit a cigarette. He rose and strode across the hallway, into the blue living room, and mixed himself a Martini. Everywhere he went, twilight crept with him. He walked from lamp to lamp, leaving behind a string of soft lights. He drew the curtains. He sat down on the long couch. His marriage was a house, he thought. If he started exploring, he would discover, in each room, a year of his life. In the last room he would find himself curled in a film of silence, water, heartbeat. He sipped his drink. Perhaps nothing was wrong. Maybe all he needed was a rest. If he retired, he could paint again. The doorbell rang. The arrival of the guests, their belief in him, made him believe in himself, and as he rose from the couch to open the door he almost felt happy.

As Scobie changed, he could hear his parents arguing in their bedroom. He closed his door and stood naked before the mirror. Should he shave off his beard? No, he decided, though he often resented both his beard and long hair, wished he could shed his messy, graceless uniform. He put on a clean white shirt and a clean pair of bluejeans, then pulled a small wooden box, a slender pipe, and a letter from his suitcase. Matthew had not returned from Penelope's yet. The room was peaceful, early-evening light filtering in through the open window. Below, in the garden, the swimming pool was as still as the mirror. Scobie sat down in a chair by the window, opened the box, crumpled a chunk of hashish into the pipe, and smoked, his feet up on the windowsill. Opening the letter, he read it for the third time. It was from Susan, a girl he had met at a dance in the fall. She was spending the summer in New York, working for Welfare. Her letters were written in a funny, Victorian syntax that made Scobie ache to be with her. He remembered her small smells—perfume, wool, sweat, apprehension—and nearly moaned. Why was he spending the summer at home when he could have stayed with her? I must be crazy, he thought. What if I get back and she doesn't love me anymore? There was a knock on the door. "Who is it?"

"Quentin."

"Come in."

His brother walked into the room, dressed for dinner, his eyes shyly circling the room, then resting on Scobie. "What're you doing?"

"Uh, reading."

"What's that smell?"

Scobie laughed. "Dope. Hash. Want some?"

"I don't know," Quentin said, sit-

CAVE PAINTINGS

1

After dark, police sirens rip us
Awake. We crouch, hands over ears, our walls
Too small to hold such raucous invasion.

In Woodland Park, in caves
Of municipal concrete, the wolf
Shivers, the cougar shakes her chained ears.

2

Pebbles in a dish: opal, jade,
And one against sufficient light
A palpable smoke. All these

Are from Californian beaches. But here's
From Oregon a stone, from the castellated
Rim of the continent, its moats holding

Sea lions, voices of moist caves. Spray
Decorates the sky, the rattle of draining
Pebbles runs south from river-mouth to river-

Mouth. Here are sharks' teeth, two, for
Needling, bloodletting. And I have arrowheads:
This from Washington; that, of greater age, from Somerset.

3

The thrush comes into the house, I hear
Its soft battering against the window glass.

And I leave my desk, speaking to it,
Tolerate its panic, its round, wild eye,

The way it spreads its wings in a bare
Ache against the pane. I am accustomed

To creatures, release it. It leaves behind
Two slight feathers, the yellow stain of its droppings.

4

There is no photograph, but I think him
Tall. He stood in twenty acres of grass
And a whole unfenced mountain uprose

Behind him. Certainly he worked
Eight sons timid, ruled all daylight,
Roaring at animals. Left, at the end,

Nothing, but was the last of us, long
Ago, to come off that brutal soil with
Innocent power. So I think him tall.

5

A Staffordshire greyhound, fawn, couchant,
Thin stylized neck and flexible white hocks,
He sits in still clay on a dais of royal blue.

Six inches in length, the glaze crazed
Nowhere, and one gold line untarnished
Along the hollow plinth, he is preserved

By lucky accident. Pharaohs knew his like.
He dreams in the shadow between two shelves,
Linking time with time. Is a potent hunter.

6

Waterfalls, pools, streams, rivers,
And the loud, monotonous, empty

Drop through the centuries; the cave
Remembers water, was drilled

By water. Scatterings
Of light floated among bats

Pendulous as fruit in the rock's
Cold branches. A dry cave holds

Darkness to its walls, as water
Holds the shape of its flowing.

7

This domed, heavy glass, it satisfies
The hand. Its concentric flowers, whorls,

Shells, and colored rods, its airy
Bubbles even, all are held in a still

Dance. I keep it for its solid
Roundness against time, and for the men,

In France two hundred years ago, who by
Some perfect means of their mortality

Made it, full and heavy, from fragile silicas,
And sent its casual permanence to my hand.

8

Emblems, plaques, icons, symbols
Of the decaying hand; stones, or

Feathers, identified by warm
Sight, and touched, and put

Aside; or voices,
Transferred as they vanish

In handled syllables, we keep
From the breaking dust, against

The filling of the cave. For
The cave is filling, fills

Rapidly. It closes,
From the eyes in.

—Leslie Norris

• •

ting down on the bed nearest the window. "I've never tried it."

"Want to?"

Quentin hesitated. "Yes."

"Maybe you're too young," Scobie said. "Maybe I'm corrupting you. But what the hell. This is great stuff. Afghan. I'll just break a bit off, like so, and light my trusty match. Quentin, don't worry about it. It's not going to hurt you. Really. O.K.?"

"Yeah."

"All right. If I can just get this damn match . . . O.K. Now, slowly, that's it—no, too much." Scobie slapped his gagging brother on the back. "O.K.?"

"Yeah," Quentin gasped.

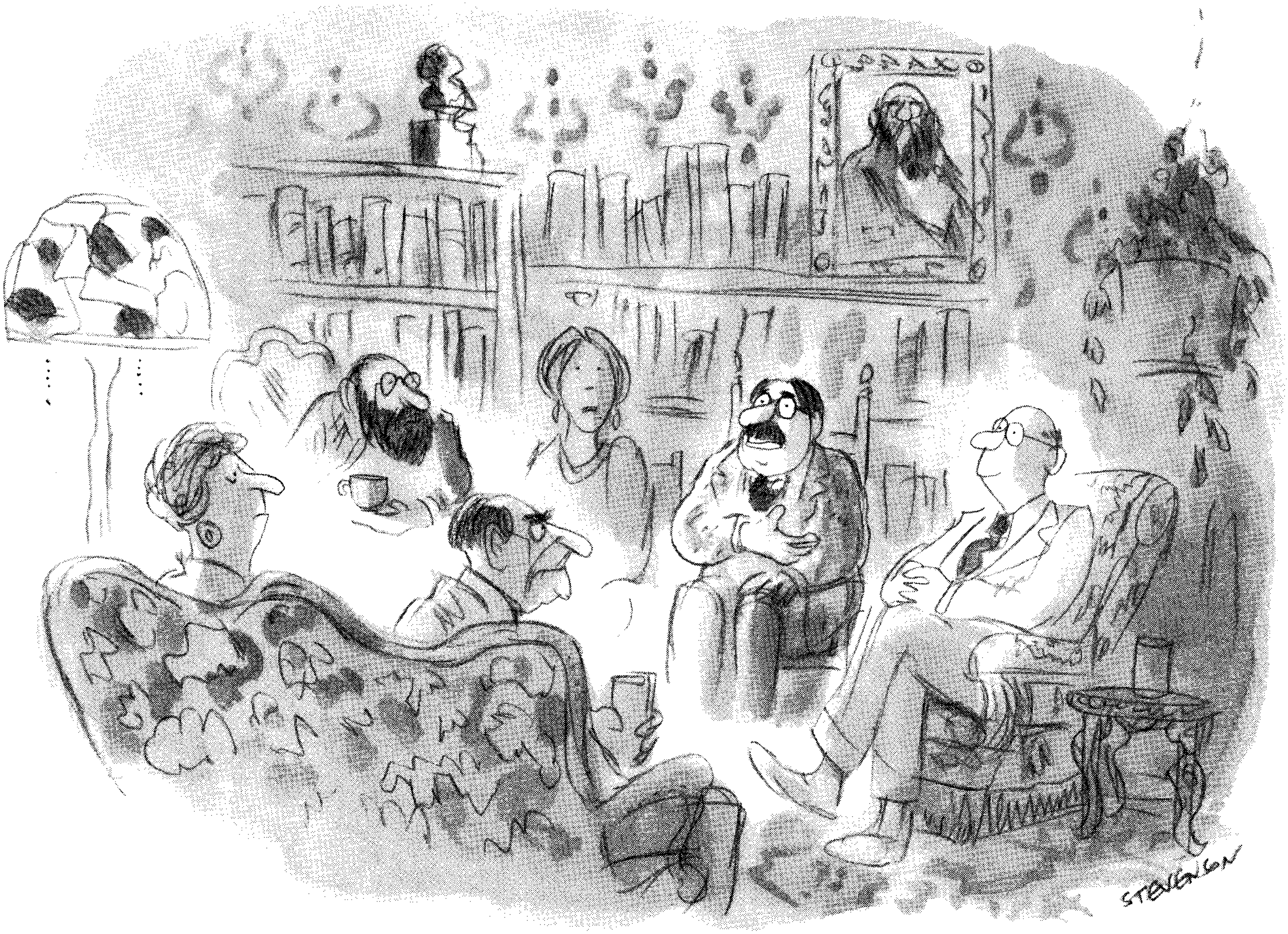
"Want to try again?"

"Yeah."

"Now, slowly. Perfect, beautiful. Enough, don't be greedy, keep it in, very good. Now, slowly, let it out. O.K.?"

"Yeah." Quentin smiled.

"Next time, hold it in a little longer. How're you feeling?"



"Our colleague Professor Bodley has been appearing on several what I believe are called 'talk shows' in connection with his new book."

• •

"Yeah. I mean fine."

Scobie lit the pipe a few more times and they passed it between them. Then they both sat back and stared at each other, Scobie already forgetting the evening, the way the air reflected the city's tired collapse, the distant clamor of horns and screeching brakes. Instead, he was a child again, waiting with Alice Taylor for the bus to take them to school. As he waited, he tried to memorize a poem: " 'The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn door.' "

"Haven't you learned that yet?" Alice exclaimed.

"Of course," he said. "I'm just practicing."

In his head, highwaymen and galleons, moonlight and shutters whirled together in confusion, a beautiful chaos he was sure he would never master. Alice stood so close he could have caressed her cheeks. Her small fingers clasped her satchel, her hair rose toward him like golden seaweed. The bus arrived, doors hissing open, and they were pulled inside by heat. Hands reached down from straw baskets, briefcases, and packages wrapped in patterned paper, steering them through the sweet smells of bread and perfume to a seat by a window, where they sat and watched the passing awnings, yellow houses, waving trees. The bus ride seemed to last for years. They grew older, watching the world through the window. Alice held his hand, seriously, comfortably. They knew each other so well their own children might know themselves in their tranquillity. Alice smiled, seeing something in the street that pleased her. On and on the bus drove, past churches and orchards, graveyards and airports, up winding mountain roads and over rattling wooden bridges. They saw fountains filled with leaves, they saw squares filled with strolling couples. They never left the bus, they never moved from their seats, their childhood marriage. So why was she skipping across the gravel schoolyard, her satchel slapping her thigh, her yellow dress a spot of sunlight beneath the pines, her voice calling back through the years, "Open the window, open the window!"

SAM watched his sons walk into the living room. They were smiling, almost giggling, Quentin obviously pleased to have his brothers home, Scobie and Matthew looking like ancient warriors, their hair so long it covered their shoulders. Sam handed Pericles a Martini. Pericles stiffened and blushed when he saw Scobie and Matthew. He thought they were hippies. Scobie waved. "Good evening, Mr. Ambassador. How goes the war machine?" Matthew laughed. Scobie shook hands with Pericles, looked at Sam. Behind his eyes Sam saw himself staring back. He smiled. "Ambassador Anderson could have you deported for insolence."

Scobie laughed, touching Sam's arm. "Am I ruining your career?"

"What career?" Sam asked. "Want a drink?"

"Please. Gin-and-tonic. Hello, Mr. Nightingale."

"Good evening, good evening."

David Nightingale, a lecturer at the

"Down by the old millstream . . ."

• •

university, smiled apologetically, waved his words away, dismissed them. His hands hovered, uncertain birds, then fluttered into his pockets. His face was narrow and ascetically rugged—he seemed to have weathered many intellectual battles. This combination of incapacity and victory made him handsome.

"How's the world of literature?" Scobie asked.

"Terrible," David replied.

Scobie shook hands with Nick and Anne Sinclair. Ice cubes clattered into a glass. "Thanks, Dad."

Sue was sitting on the arm of the couch, across the living room, talking to Laura. Sam watched them both. Younger than Laura, Sue was not as beautiful. Her face was plain and angular, her long, pale hands made awkward gestures as she talked, her clothes were conservative and inelegant. Laura laughed, resting her hand on Sue's arm. They leaned together like conspirators. Laura was wearing a simple white evening dress. Sam mixed drinks for Matthew and Quentin, then wandered over to talk to Nick. Anne left them alone, joining David and Pericles by the open window. Sam felt he was participating in an elaborate and very formal dance. Nick lit a cigarette and leaned back in his chair. He had the best mind Sam knew—quick, comprehensive, logical. Nick believed details were the truth, and looked for answers where others saw only incidentals. Years ago, when he and Sam were roommates at Harvard, he had predicted, in his quiet way, that he would do something important and anonymous. Looking at him now, Sam realized how much he had aged. His red hair was graying. Light sparkled from his pink-framed glasses as he turned to Sam. "Your sons are stoned."

"What?"

"Stoned. Drugs."

"How do you know?"

"Because that's my son's natural state."

Sam stared across at Scobie, Matthew, and Quentin. They were sitting together, whispering and laughing. Scobie met his eyes and smiled self-consciously. Sam suddenly felt light-headed himself. "Is it like being drunk, I wonder?"

"Probably," Nick said. "Though they never make such fools of themselves as we do when we're drunk."

Sam shook his head. "Crazy times."

"Amen."

"Now they're putting a man on the moon."

Nick sipped his drink. "I remember reading Tom Swift and thinking, No one can fly to the moon. Impossible. Science fiction."

"You'd have to be insane to be one of those astronauts."

"No," Nick said. "Just too dumb to get scared."

Laughing, Sam watched Laura leave Sue and disappear into the kitchen. Immediately, Scobie sat down next to Sue. She was flattered, flustered. Stoned or not, Scobie entertained. Sue was sexy, Sam admitted to himself.

"Laura told me you're going to Washington tomorrow," Nick said.

"That's right."

"They'll probably tell you to hold me back."

"Probably. On the other hand, they don't really know what you're doing."

"True." Nick pushed out his cigarette. "I don't envy you, though. I hate Washington."

Sam looked at him. "Do you realize you and I haven't lived in the country we're supposed to represent for over ten years? Not really *lived* there. I go back home and it's a foreign country. Yet we talk to foreigners as if we were Americans, as if there were some connection between what we do and what people are doing at home. That's even crazier than goddam astronauts."

"You're getting cynical, Sam."

"Not cynical. Tired. Aren't you?"

"No." Nick was embarrassed. "Sorry, Sam. Sure I'm tired. And you know what else? The higher you get in this business, the more boring the job. All day long I sit at a desk shuffling papers. What the hell kind of job is that?"

"But you'll never quit."

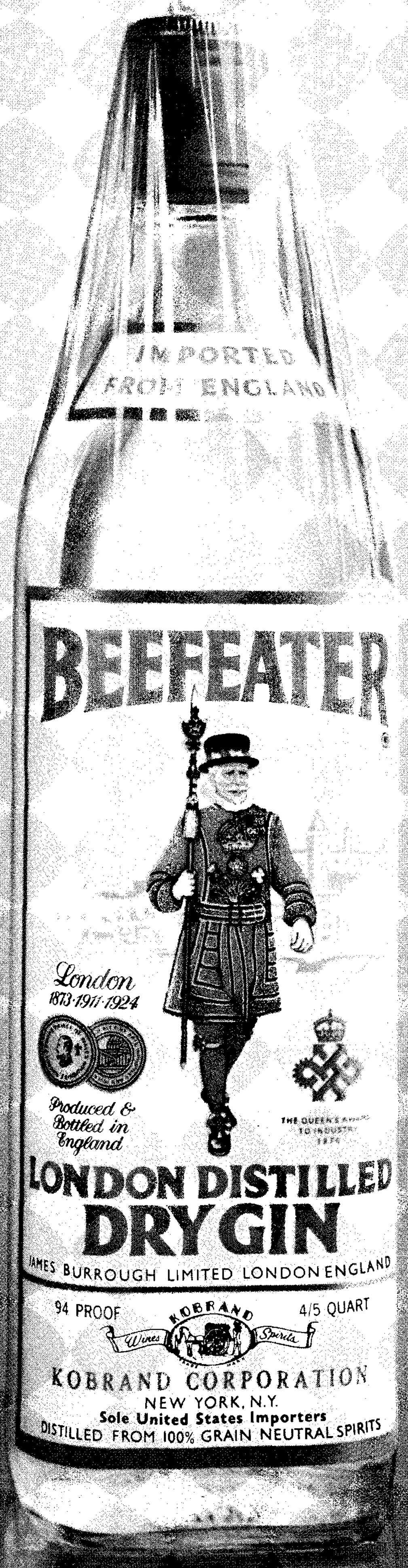
"I'll have to, one of these days. They'll make me. Anyway, I'm getting tired of pushing around middle-aged failures."

"If you had it to do over, would you?" Sam asked.

"I don't know. I've had a good time."

"Me, too. As Laura reminds me, we've been very lucky."

"True." Nick pulled at his shirt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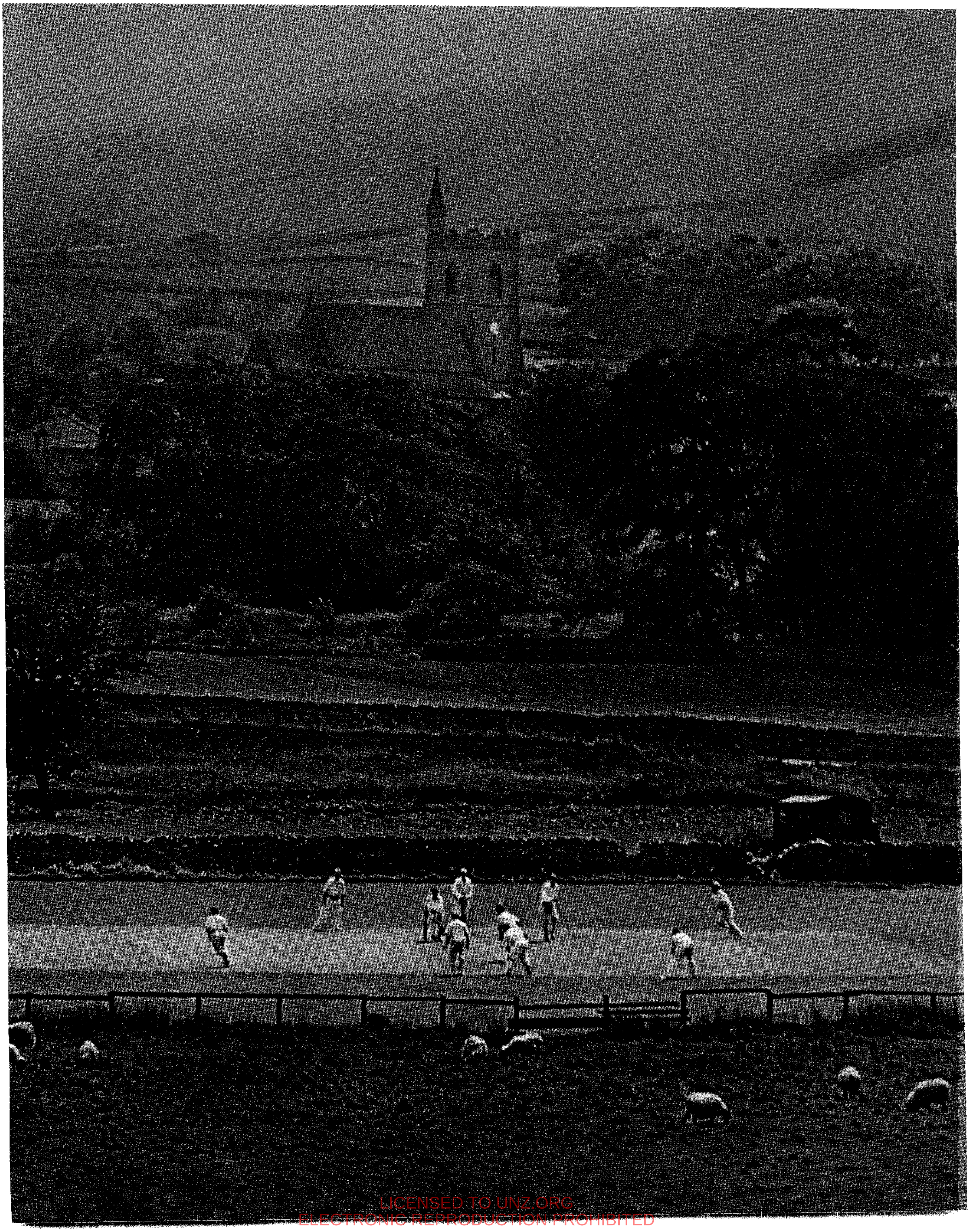

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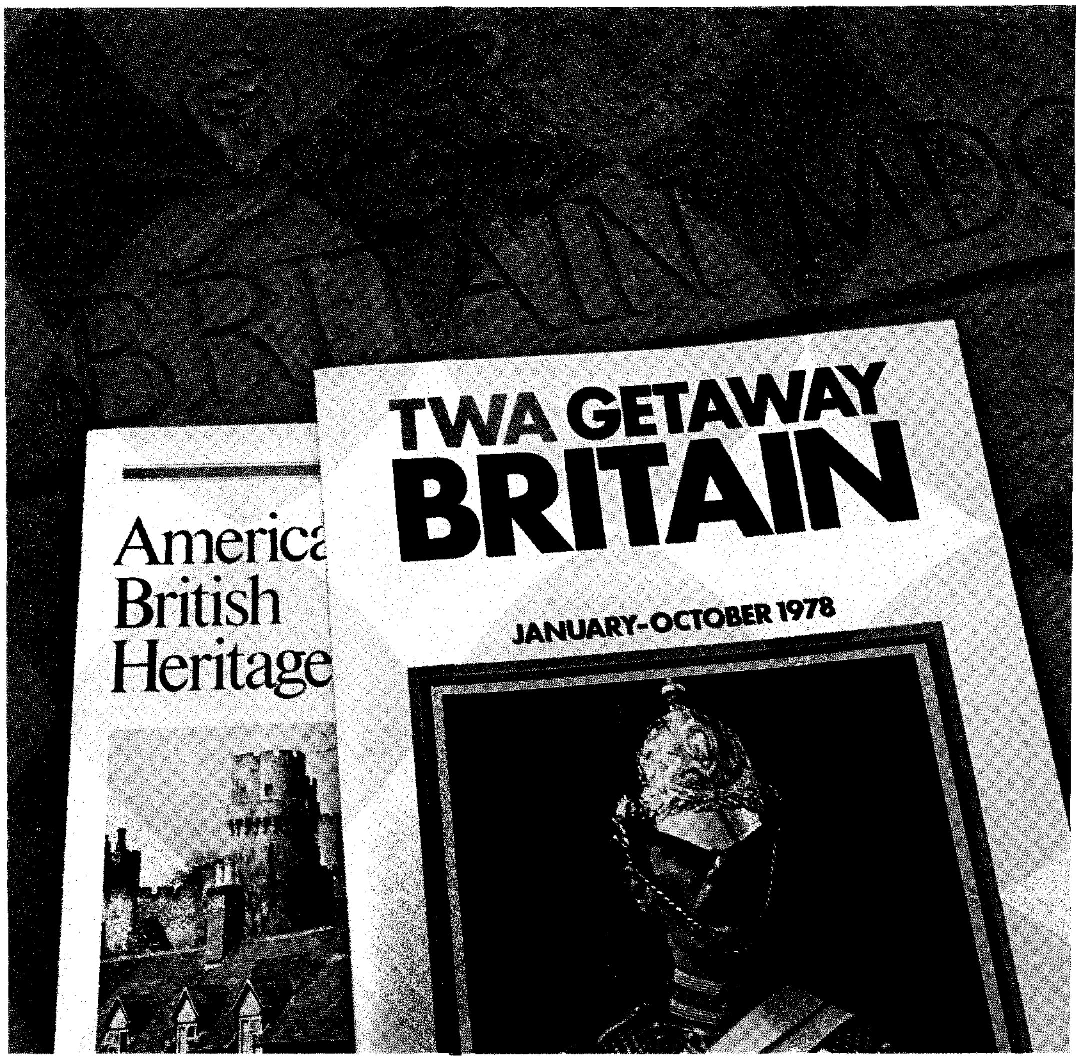

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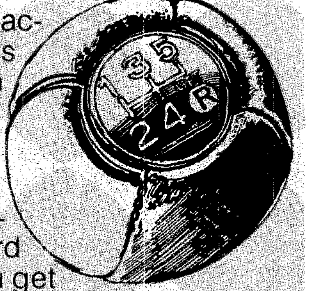

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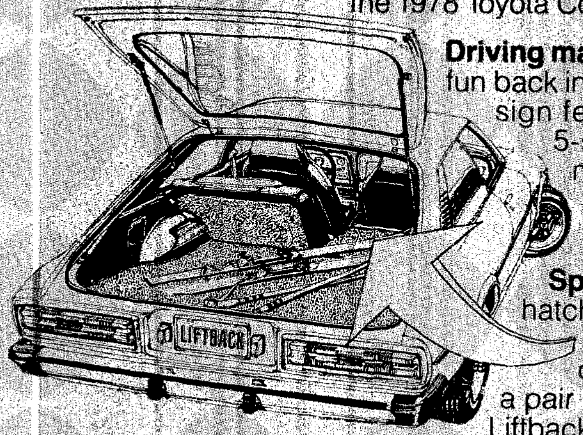

Driving made fun again. Corolla Liftback puts the fun back in driving because it's got many of the design features of a sports car. Like a standard 5-speed overdrive transmission. So you get maximum performance from the peppy 1.6 liter engine. Corolla also has MacPherson strut front suspension and steel belted radial-ply tires. So it handles as crisply as it moves out.

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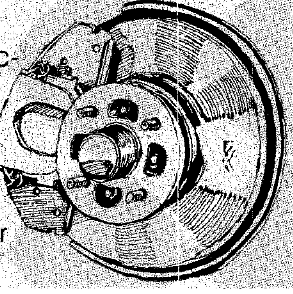

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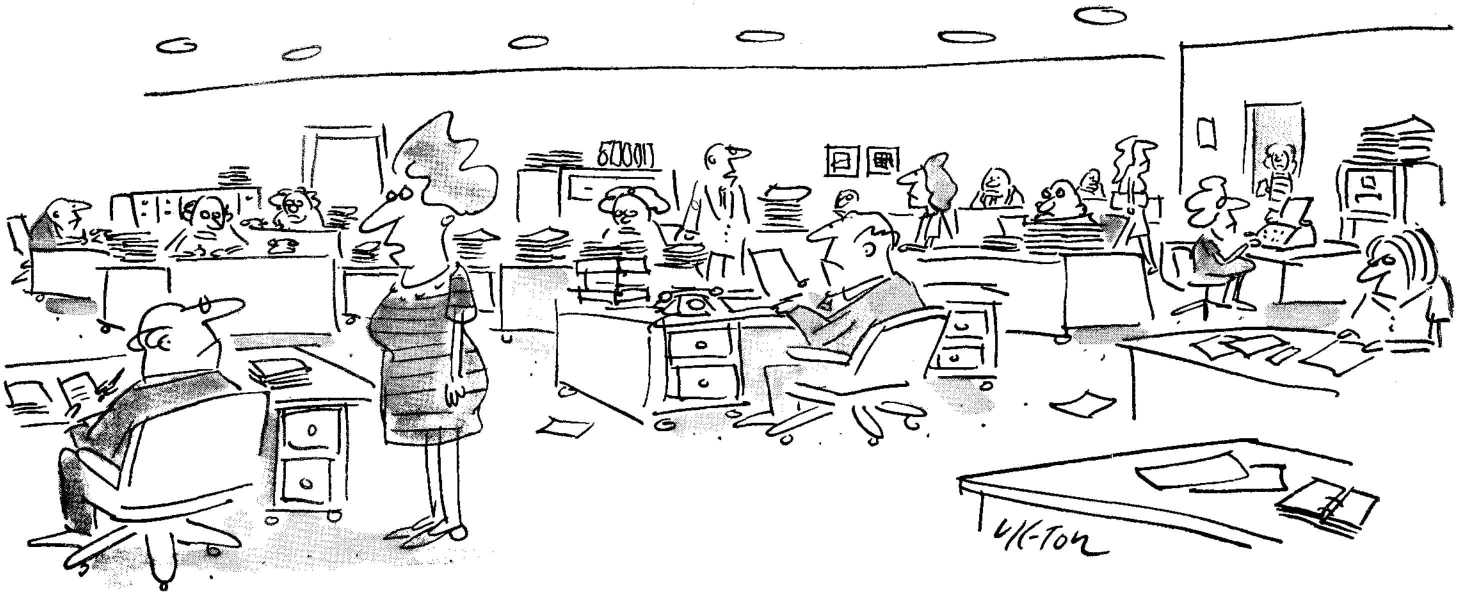

"It's almost three o'clock, Mr. Jeffries. Should I pass out the balloons?"

• •

collar, then ran his fingers down his tie. "Lucky and underpaid."

"Dinner," Laura announced from the doorway.

PASSING the wine, Laura looked down at Nick's thinning hair and handsomely broken nose, his large knuckles, his eyes—they varied, in different lights, from green to pale gray—swimming in the lenses of his glasses. For weeks, he and Laura had been meeting in places like the Hilton bar, where he quietly and sadly confessed that he thought Anne was sleeping with another man, someone in the French Embassy. This afternoon, Laura had noticed a new tone in his voice, needful, almost desperate. "I love you," he had declared, not knowing whether he should smile. She told him he was confusing confession and love. "Perhaps," he conceded. But Laura knew she was attracted to Nick. She had been for years. He would always be the other possible man, the one with whom she would occasionally flirt, the one for whom she would dress, the one whose face would sometimes float through her mind as she held Sam in her arms. She had told Nick this, sitting in the dark Hilton bar, a shadowy world that seemed to revolve through the stripes of shadow and light cast by venetian blinds. Those few hours had both drained and filled her. To be wanted, to want, and yet remain untouchable—we torture ourselves, she thought. Nick's words, rising toward her in that aura of strained intimacy, had sounded as if they knew her, and she hadn't been able to explain to him that he didn't know her, didn't know the history of the other rooms she had shared with Sam.

"I have a friend who didn't speak for two months last semester," Scobie said. "He felt every word was a distortion, a manipulation of facts. He decided that to speak is to corrupt. So he was silent."

"Christ," Sam said, looking at Laura.

She looked away. What was Sam thinking? How much he desired Sue? She was young. She was lonely. She liked to make Sam happy. She had lovely legs and large breasts. They spent so much time together it wouldn't be surprising if they loved each other. Laura's mind moved farther from the dinner table, the words filling the comfortable room. She remembered sitting on the porch every summer afternoon when she was a little girl, listening to her best friend Cassie practicing her cello next door. Cassie played in the parlor, near an open window. Laura could hear every note. Mrs. MacKenzie, stooped in her garden plucking lettuce, would stop and listen too, her eyes clouding like a sailor's. But now Laura was miles and years from that shady street, those summer afternoons. Now she was living a particular life in a particular way at a particular time, and, no matter what she thought or dreamed or desired, her path was marked and she was travelling on it toward a place that had been waiting for her since birth. She had sat by beds all night, watching dreaming children, their fragile bodies struggling not to drown, their hearts racing fear. What did Nick know about that? Down dark hallways a caught breath can sound like a scream. Nick and I will be separated forever by all that we've never experienced together, she thought, trying to catch up with the conversation. They were talking about Matthew. "How is leaving college going to help?" she asked. "How can you solve anything by withdrawing, hiding?"

"Mom, part of the problem is your faith in solving problems," Matthew said.

DAVID and Laura laughed, sharing a secret. Sam put down his wineglass, his chest tightening, his tongue thick and dry. Were they having an affair? Could a limp-wristed professor of poetry, in patched tweeds and frayed woollen ties, steal his wife? Fear and sadness rose through Sam's body. He tried eating, but everything tasted of iron.

"Your father tells me you want to leave college," Pericles said to Matthew.

"Yes, sir."

"Why?"

"I'm not learning anything."

"Anything?"

"I'm not learning what I want to learn."

"And what would that be?" Sam asked.

"I told you, Dad, it's hard to talk about. It's hard to put into words."

"I have a friend who didn't speak for two months last semester," Scobie said. "He felt every word was a distortion, a manipulation of facts. He decided that to speak is to corrupt. So he was silent."

"Christ," Sam said. Laura smiled and looked away.

"What would you do?" Nick asked.

"Travel," Matthew said.

"Where?"

"It doesn't really matter. Afghanistan, maybe. Or India."

"You know, I really don't understand you guys," Sam said. "You act as if the world were falling apart."

"It is."

"Religious fanatics have been predicting our downfall for centuries. We're still here, aren't we?"

"For the time being, yes."

"How is leaving college going to help?" Laura asked. "How can you solve anything by withdrawing, hiding?"

"Mom, part of the problem is your faith in solving problems," Matthew said. "Every time we solve a problem, we create new problems, each new problem more difficult to solve than the last, more dangerous than the last. Vietnam is a solution to a problem created by another solution. Right?"

"You have to work, Matthew," Sam said.

"Not for the government."

"When I was your age, working for the government seemed an honorable thing to do. Should I grow my hair long and pick fleas in Vermont? Is that what I should do?"

"I didn't say that."

David cleared his throat. " 'And we are here as on a darkling plain swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight, where ignorant armies clash by night.' "

"Oh, shut up," Sam said.

"Sam."

Sam felt like a child. "I'm sorry."

"Let's not talk about politics anymore," Laura said.

"You sound like Nana," Scobie said. "What else is there to talk about?"

"Living," she said.

"What you call living is for the rest of the world a political problem."

"Intellectuals solve nothing," Pericles pronounced.

"I'm not an intellectual." Scobie laughed.

"What are you laughing about?" Sam said.

"Nothing."

Sam started to laugh, too. "Nothing?"

"Nothing," Scobie said.

"I think you're both out of your minds," Laura said. "Somebody please tell me something nice."

"I have an announcement to make." Sam smiled. "Today is our anniversary. We've been married twenty-seven years."

He reached into his jacket pocket and handed Laura a small white box. She took the box, looking at him, amazed, and held it before her like an offering. Scobie and his brothers clapped, whistled, stamped their feet. Nick and Anne raised their glasses in

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a toast. Pericles grinned, despite himself, flushed and slightly drunk. David sang congratulations, his bitterness disguised as ceremony. Sue's eyes moistened. Opening the box, Laura removed a small golden bird. "Oh, Sam, it's beautiful."

"Over a thousand years old," he said. "The gift of some ancient emperor to his lovely princess."

He felt he was driving a knife through Sue's breasts, into her heart.

"Thank you," Laura said. "Thank you, thank you." She leaned across the table and kissed him.

Quentin looked at his mother. Her face wavered in the candlelight. She had lost weight, just as his father had gained weight, and Quentin imagined the process continuing until she was thin air and his father was pure matter. Quentin felt he was looking at a photograph taken of her before he was born. Though her hair, cut short, was beginning to gray, and a few wrinkles creased the corners of her eyes, she seemed a young girl waiting for a date. She was not the woman he had always thought of as his mother but another woman, a stranger who had inadvertently become his mother—a vague double who filled the room with rage and delight. "Do you know why the flower is so important in Persian poetry?" she asked Ambassador Anderson. "Imagine spending days and days on the desert, then arriving in Isfahan or Shiraz. Imagine the trees, the gardens, the water. Imagine what a flower means to a man who lives on the desert."

"Don't forget the fireworks," Mr. Nightingale said.

"We have half an hour," Mr. Sinclair said, looking at his wristwatch. "Plenty of time."

"I know it's silly but I love watching fireworks," Sue Benson said, immediately blushing.

Matthew and Ambassador Anderson started arguing about Vietnam. The words were always the same. Both his brothers, Quentin knew, were opposed to the war. They had marched in protest many times. Matthew had been arrested for throwing chicken blood at Senator Klee. Scobie said he was going to avoid the draft. The war had become, for them, an obsession, and they would forgive no one who didn't agree with them. "It's very simple," Matthew was saying. "We're the neighborhood bully picking on the small kid. We try to justify it with all sorts of rhetoric, but in fact there's no good political or economic or intellectual or moral reason to be there. We're just getting our sick kicks, that's all. We won't even admit we're trying to build an empire. We're afraid of losing. We're afraid of being emasculated. We're so insecure about ourselves that we're incapable of compassion. It's disgusting."

"I'm not sure I understand your logic," Sam said. "Are we building an empire or are we simply depraved bullies?"

"Both."

"Would you feel better if we were only building an empire? If there were good reasons to be there?"

"No."

Quentin stopped listening. He looked at Scobie, who was watching Matthew, a mixture of pride and fear on his face. Quentin wished Scobie would look at him that way. And what was going on between his mother and father? The tension was palpable. They had been arguing about something before dinner. He had never heard them really fight before. Usually they just lost their tempers with each other, became irritated and melancholy. Why did Quentin feel responsible? Why did he feel their anger was his fault? Maybe he was imagining the whole thing. I'm stoned, he thought, much the way he had recently thought, I'm not a virgin anymore. He realized this and wondered when it would end, when he would stop getting initiated into different and more complicated states of consciousness. His mother stood from the table, smiling. "Time to celebrate," she said, moving from the dining room toward the hallway.

"Quentin." It was Scobie, leaning close and whispering. "How're you doing?"

"O.K."

"This is getting a little weird," Matthew whispered, appearing beside them.

His brothers surrounded him, almost linking arms, the way they had as children, and led him into the hallway, where everyone else was waiting by the front door. Matthew's fingers, light as a breeze, brushed Quentin's arm, in-

evitably reassuring. What was he trying to say?

THE Embassy was dark, the tops of the trees swayed like sleeping elephants. Around the walls, the city droned: automobiles, lovers. A street of small booths ringed the running children. Lights and laughter echoed in the darkness, but Sam listened to another sound, watched another sight, something within the celebration that was not a celebration. Looking up, he saw the moon waiting in stillness. Suspended above the lawn was a screen, and on the screen, which was as dark as the night, giant astronauts whirled through space, their white helmets glowing in a hidden light. They seemed to float and spin just inches above the lawn. Fireworks tattooed the air. A girl strode through the crowd, her red hair reflecting the cascading sparks. "I'll be right back," Sam said to Laura, stepping into the crowd. He jumped to see above the crewcuts, hair curlers, sun hats. The girl was fifty yards away, standing at a booth with a rifle in her hands. Sam pushed through the children. "Excuse me, excuse me." He arrived at the booth just as the girl, with a sly, coy smile at the young man behind the counter, lifted the rifle to her shoulder and fired a round of perfect shots into the heart of a cardboard figure. The young man handed her a purple giraffe. When she leaned forward to accept her prize, her fingers lingered upon the fingers of the young man. Sam walked back to Laura. Why had he followed that girl? More fireworks exploded above his head. In the shattering light, he saw Laura's face, as smooth and peaceful as a face in sleep.

She smiled. "It's beautiful, in a way, don't you think?"

"The fall of Pompeii," Sam said.

Scobie, Matthew, and Quentin stood next to Laura, watching the fireworks, the movie, astounded as natives glimpsing an airplane for the first time. David had disappeared. Sue was pitching pennies at one of the booths. Nick was up in his office, checking cables, and Anne—Anne, too, had disappeared. Sam looked at the moon again. It seemed so tranquil. He wondered what it would be like to be an astronaut, floating in silence far above the distant green earth. Terrifying, or peaceful? The moon refused to tell him. Nearby, someone shouted, and Sam turned to see a tribe of strangers walking through the compound gates, dressed in bright colors—cotton and

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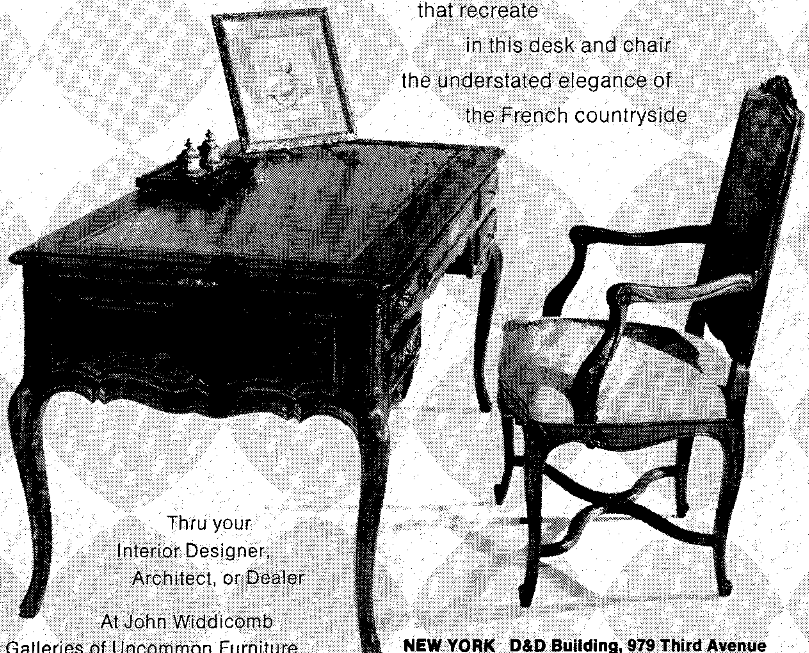

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silk. The men had long hair and the women's breasts were bared to suckling children. People turned and stared. Who were they? Sam looked for Nick or Pericles. Realizing he was the only officer present, he walked toward the tribe. When he reached the first man, he stopped. "Good evening," he said. "Who are you?"

"Tommy Catolla. From Des Moines, Iowa. Pleased to meet you."

"What are you doing so far from home?" Sam asked, shaking Tommy's hand.

"We're in the Peace Corps."

"All of you?"

"Yes, sir."

"You're all Americans?"

"That's right. We've come for the Fourth of July. The celebration."

"O.K.," Sam said. "Welcome."

What else could he do? They worked for the government. They were Americans. They had as much right to be here as anyone else. He stood aside and smiled. They moved toward the movie, bracelets rattling and bells tinkling, sat down on the grass, cross-legged, and gaped at the spectacle.

"Amazing," Scobie said, coming up to Sam's side. "Who are they?"

"Peace Corps," Sam replied.

Scobie shook his head and laughed. "I don't believe this."

"What?"

"*This.*" He waved at the night. "That movie, the fireworks, the Army guys chugging beer, all those people in Bermuda shorts and madras shirts, and now . . . gypsies. It's incredible."

Sam walked away, through the Embassy door and up the stairs to his office. Sue was sitting behind her desk, her face hidden in the palms of her hands. She did not look up. Sitting down, Sam listened to the firecrackers outside. Bursts of colored light pulsed in the dark room. "Sue?"

"Yes?" Her voice was muffled.

"What we did, last night?"

"Yes."

"We can't, ever again."

"I know." She raised her eyes, looked at him. "You didn't have to tell me that."

"Laura is my wife. She's the only woman I love. Oh, Christ, Sue, I want my marriage."

"I know, Sam."

"I'm sorry."

"Don't be." She straightened, searched through her purse for a handkerchief, and blew her nose. "Waste of time."

"If Laura knew—"

"Of *course* she knows." Sue leaned

forward. "Sam, the pain is already there."

He was silent, watching the small explosions of light fill and darken her eyes. Fatigue, fluid and hot, rushed through his bones. Here I am, he thought. Aging diplomat, traveller, and husband, father of three. His hands were sweating. He rubbed them dry on his thighs, loosened his tie. His chest, or heart, suddenly screamed. He bent forward and clasped his knees, but the pain rose in him, burning his body. Breathe slowly, he thought. Slowly, slowly. He needed one of his pills. They were at home in the drawer of the bedside table. Sue was leaning over him, her hands on his shoulders. The pain subsided, throbbed.

"Sam?" It was Nick, at the door. "We've got a problem. Better hurry."

Nick's voice, its sternness and conviction, pulled Sam from the chair, pulled his pain, like a hook, from his heart. "What's up?" he asked, following Nick down the corridor. "What's the matter?"

"Hippies," Nick said.

"What hippies? You mean the Peace Corps? What about them?"

"And soldiers."

"Hippies and soldiers?"

"Fight," Nick said. "Like cats and dogs, Americans and Russians."

They opened the Embassy door and saw, in the careering light of the fireworks and the flickering, spectral movie, that the tribe had gathered in a circle, the women in the middle, soothing their children. Soldiers jeered and threw beer cans from the periphery. Everyone else had surrounded the two groups and watched, unmoving, mouths open. Nick and Sam hurried into the crowd, stepping between the Peace Corps and the soldiers. "All right, break it up," Sam said. He was furious, he realized. He wanted to knock heads together, hear the satisfying crunch of bone. "You," he said, pointing to one of the soldiers. "Move on. Beat it. What have these people done to you?"

The soldier, obviously drunk, gave Sam the finger. Nick grabbed the soldier by the lapels and shook him. "You heard the man. Beat it." Another beer can sailed over their heads. Sam heard a woman scream.

"Out of the way, old man," a soldier said, pushing Sam.

"Here come the M.P.s!" Nick shouted.

MATTHEW paused to stare in the window of the travel agency at a miniature 727, convinced he could

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shrink and enter the airplane, fasten his seat belt, and fly away. He always seemed to be glimpsing life in a false sleep between destinations. He had waited in hotels, airports, train stations, and bus terminals for the love of his life to walk by, swinging her long hair behind her and smelling of the ocean and summer. He might as well have been standing before a painting, hoping to will the woman brushing her hair by the window to turn and speak, shatter the heartbreaking light, touch him. And yet there was that time he had stood on the corner of a square, watching sunset soothe the statue of an old hero whose face was lifted high to see, above the jumble of chimneys and washing lines, the harbor at the foot of the hill—that moment he had felt a citizen, not a traveller. Where? Turning from the window, he hurried after his brothers, through the compound gates. Two astronauts were floating and spinning above the black lawn. Matthew stopped and stared.

Scobie's fingers circled his arm. "I think I'm hallucinating. I see two giant astronauts over there."

"No, they're real," Quentin said. "I mean, it's a movie."

"What? A movie?" Scobie laughed. "But there's no plot, no message, nothing. We've been cheated. There's not even any sex. Or violence. Or catharsis, for Chrissake. What would Aristotle say? He'd walk out. I'm walking out."

"Wait," Quentin said. "Look at the fireworks."

A small ball of light rushed into the sky. Star bursts, Matthew thought. Celebrations for the assassin nation. Mass for the eyeless millions. Hissing sparks sped streaking up, up, vanished, then suddenly reappeared—hesitant, concussive screams. Matthew saw the edges of trees, the clear, hard lines of the Embassy, the stalls, booths, concessions, the bartering, playful soldiers. He looked up at the stars, the moon. If only there were a way to slow the sentence, to struggle without speaking. He felt the fireworks on his skin, the soft circles of light burning the backs of his eyelids. The muffled shuffling of feet reached him, a roar to accompany celestial detonations, an audience shouting for him to get out of the way so it could see the mourners pass by, shaved and naked, stripped of teeth, watches, and rings. Matthew stopped. Everyone, everywhere, stopped. Nothing, no one, moved. Even the movie stopped, astronauts pinned to the screen. A Roman candle burst and everyone continued moving, slowly, as if he had never stopped but was tired, mysteriously weary, almost happy. Matthew pressed the tips of his fingers to his closed eyes and saw a dark museum filled with trolley cars. Opening his eyes, he watched his hands sink back into his pockets. "Don't slouch," he told himself, slouching. Why, he wondered, unexpectedly lucid, did the thought of leaving college seem so frightening? Was it because he would be leaving home as well, leaving forever the force that had always kept him and Scobie and Quentin in the same orbit? Though Matthew knew he must someday leave, he had thought the movement would be geographic, a simple matter of miles and hours. What if everyone left in every way? Was that already happening? He looked at his family's faces in the crackling light, then turned and stared at the movie screen, the swirling white astronauts, and remembered sitting with Scobie in a hot dark room watching his first movie. There was no air inside the room, only breathing, heartbeat, the darkness, Scobie's hand, his familiarity suddenly threatened, a smell of men, and the swirling tunnel of light that became the movie. A deep stir rippled the darkness. Bodies heaved and settled. A man with gentle eyes was beaten and dragged. Small holes like screams were hammered into his hands. His body bled clouds that broke into rain as he slowly rose, his eyes looking down, forgiving Matthew, accusing Matthew. The darkness screamed, Matthew screamed, screamed and screamed until his small body fell like a dead bird into Scobie's screaming hands. A ball of light rushed into the sky.

"A climbing comet," Scobie said, pointing. "They're showing the movie backward."

The light exploded into fragments, showering back down and extinguishing above the dark trees. Then another hissing rocket rose in a graceful arc toward the stars. This one exploded into red, white, and blue, a brief galaxy of color. Each rocket, when it exploded, shook the sky. Matthew wished he could draw a circle and step into it. The lawn trembled. The air smelled of sulphur. The Embassy, the trees, the concession booths, the jerky figures of men and women glowed, throbbed, in the momentary illuminations. People were dancing or fleeing, convulsed and

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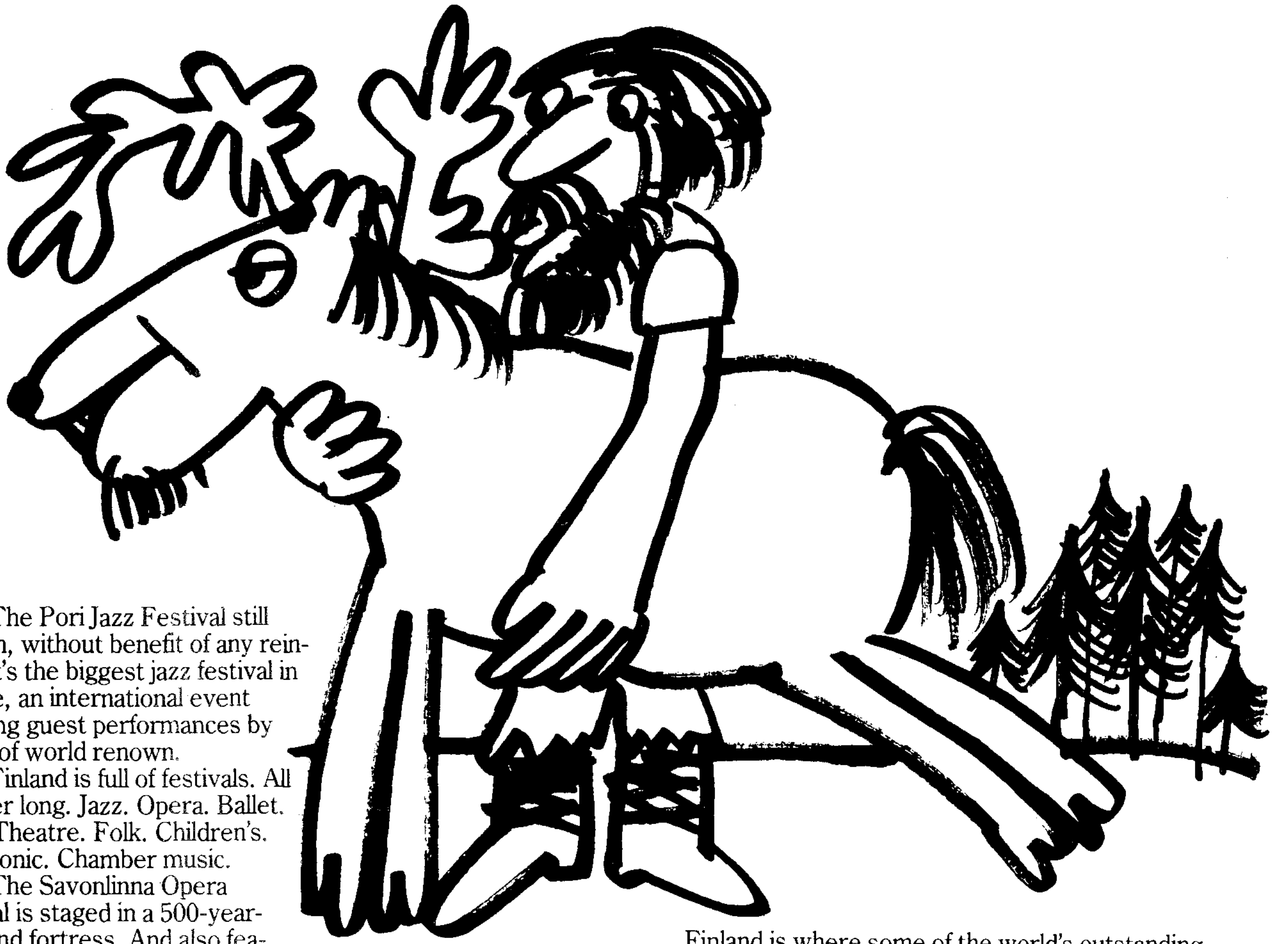

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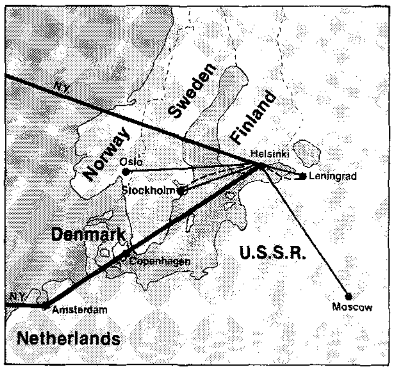

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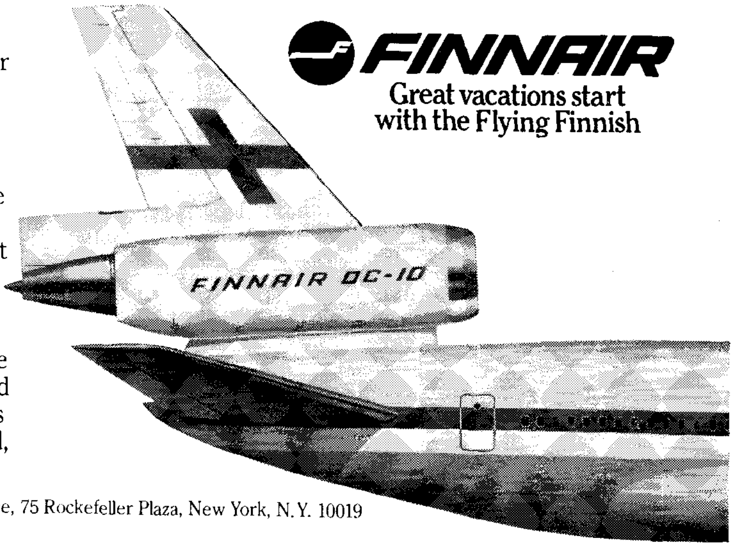

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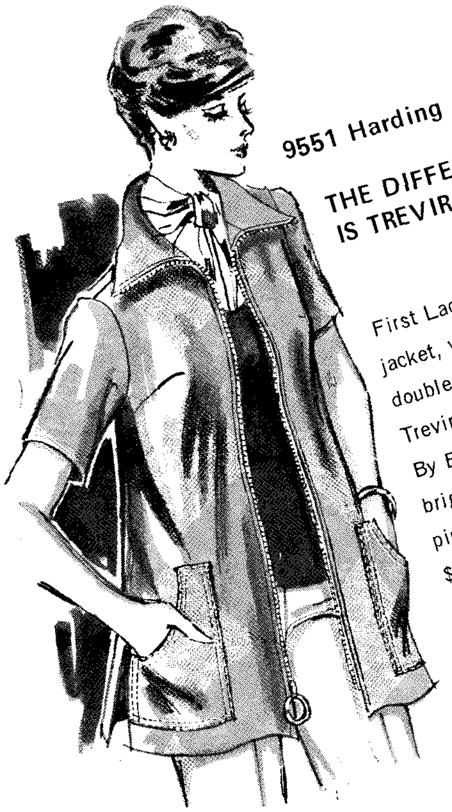

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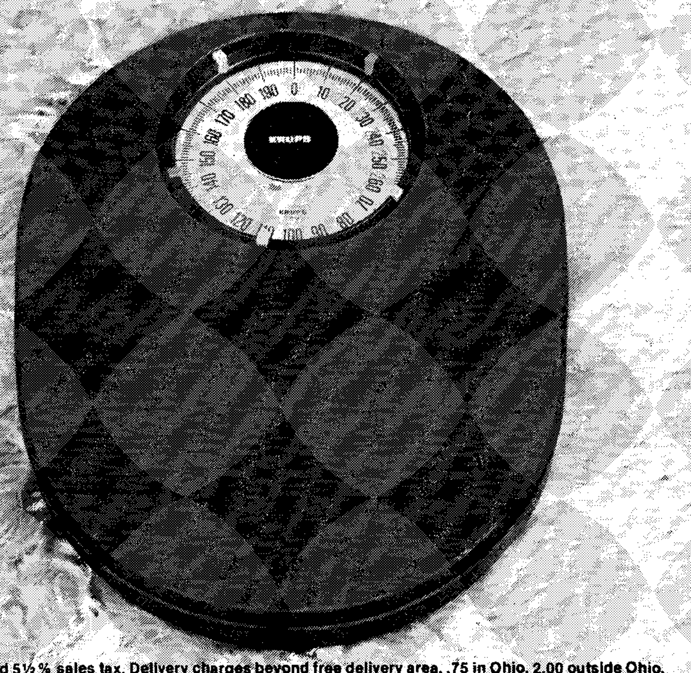

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quivering shadows. Then Matthew saw Penelope striding through the crowd, her red hair reflecting the cascading sparks. "I'll be right back," he said to his brothers, stepping into the stream of pushing bodies. He jumped to see above the crewcuts, hair curlers, sun hats. Penelope was about fifty yards away, standing at a booth with a rifle in her hands. Matthew pushed through the children. "Excuse me, excuse me." He arrived at the booth just as Penelope, with a sly, coy smile at the young man behind the counter, lifted the rifle to her shoulder and fired a round of perfect shots into the heart of a cardboard figure. The young man handed her a purple giraffe. Penelope leaned forward, breathlessly, to accept her prize, her gift, and her fingers lingered, for a second, upon the fingers of the young man. Matthew returned to his brothers. Why did he feel so betrayed? Had it started raining? He brushed the thought aside. More fireworks exploded above his head.

"I can't handle this," Scobie said. "Let's get out of here. Where's Mom?"

"She's already left," Quentin said.

"O.K. Let's go. Matthew?"

"WHO'D you think you were?" Laura asked, stroking Sam's cheek with a hot washcloth. "Ben-Hur? That you and Nick could take on the entire United States Army?"

"They started it," Sam muttered. He was sitting on the edge of the bed, naked, his head aching. "Anyway, nothing's broken. I'm O.K."

"You're lucky."

"Lucky, hell. Bunch of rag dolls. No wonder we're losing in Vietnam."

Laura walked into the bathroom, squeezed the washcloth, and draped it over the sink. "Would you like anything?" she asked, returning to the bedroom.

"Yes," Sam said. "Champagne. It's our anniversary, after all. And the Fourth of July."

"Sam, are you sure you're not delirious?"

"Laura, champagne!"

She left the bedroom. He could hear her sandals slapping the stairs, the music on the Grundig downstairs. His sons were listening to a new record, their eyes bright as marbles. Walking through the front door, he had passed them. They had not moved, he did not stop. Laura had found him upstairs, taking a shower. Now he tried to hear the words to the music. "*Lay lady lay, lay across my big brass bed.*" He lit a cigarette. "*Stay lady stay, stay* *with your man awhile.*" The room, holding the light, held him too, close as the arms of sleep. He looked at the pictures on the walls, remembering all the bedrooms they had already seen. The bureau was from Baghdad, the chairs from Cairo, the rug from Isfahan, the lamps from Athens. He remembered meeting Laura at the fountain outside the Plaza, taking her to dinner, and proposing. Laughter, warm and intimate, rose from the living room—his sons, each voice a subtle modulation of his own. Sweat slid down his arms. He was shaking. Pain pierced his chest again. He heard the shiver of rain outside, walked to the window, and looked down at the dark trees, the silver swimming pool, the garden wall. For a moment, he stood spellbound, enchanted by something familiar, as if he had seen exactly the same garden in his childhood. Then he turned and looked back at the bedroom, feeling he was outside, peering through the window. He saw the order, the tranquillity, and was amazed. Did he live there? Returning to the bed, he sat down, closed his eyes, and leaned back against the pillow. The face of the soldier he had hit floated up, shocked and surprised. Sam wished he could fly to the moon, like one of those astronauts. He wished all he saw of life was the peaceful blue earth spinning in silence. But he knew he could only fly home, and that the closest he would ever get to the moon would be his mother's words: "Just think, dear, right this minute Laura and the boys are probably watching the moon, too." Laura appeared in the doorway, a bottle of champagne and two glasses balanced on a copper tray. "Scobie opened it for me," she said, nudging the door closed behind her and resting the tray on the bedside table. Sam poured the champagne. She took a glass and tried to smile.

"Laura, I'm sorry," he said.

"For what?"

"For what I've done."

"I believe you. I believe you're sorry. I believe you're unhappy. But it's not just a question of what you've done. It's not just Sue." She was suddenly crying, her face crumpled and red, her shoulders shaking. "Sam, what's happened to us?"

"I'm sorry."

"What's *happened* to us?"

"Nothing." He heard the rain rustling the leaves in the garden. "Nothing's changed."

"Sam, it's different now." She looked at him, sadness filling her eyes, sat down next to him on the bed, and

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held his hand. Her cheeks were still wet, her eyes red, but she was no longer crying. She took a sip of champagne, wiping away her tears with the back of her hand. "It's different now," she whispered. "There's nothing to forgive."

"Laura?"

"Some part of me doesn't care, Sam. Some part of me is dead. Isn't that awful? Oh, Sam, isn't that horrible?"

SCOBIE sat cross-legged on the living-room floor with his brothers, listening to Dylan and watching the moon through the open window. The rain had stopped. Words and music floated from the old Grundig, carrying Matthew's mind from fantasy to fantasy, singing the secret life of all Quentin knew. Outside, city noises hummed, the lulling murmur of crickets and cars. Despite the war, despite the riots, despite the crazy loss of tranquillity, Matthew realized he was happy tonight, sitting here with his brothers. There was nothing to lose, nothing to leave behind. Each molecule of time confirmed his insignificance, and his insignificance set him free to experience each moment. Now, for instance. No one could take that from Scobie, no one could argue its existence. There it was, air and faith. Matthew, his hair held from his eyes by a red bandanna, lay back on the floor, his hands behind his head, and gazed at the ceiling, the whirling shadows of moonlight. "Have either of you guys noticed something weird going on around here?" he asked, rolling over and staring at Scobie and Quentin. "Between Mom and Dad."

"Yes."

"What?"

"They're having an argument," Scobie said.

"No, no, it's more than an argument."

"Quentin thinks Mother's having an affair."

"An *affair*? Mom?" Matthew was incredulous, almost mocking.

"Why not?" Quentin asked.

"She'd never do that," Matthew said.

"How do you know?" Scobie asked.

"I just know Mom, that's all. She really *believes* in her marriage. She'd never jeopardize it."

"Maybe." Scobie stared at Matthew. "I hope you're right."

"Why?" Quentin insisted. "What's wrong with Mom having an affair?"

"It's tacky."

"Everybody else's mother does. You said so yourself."

"Quentin, do you *want* Mom to be having an affair?" Matthew asked.

"Not particularly. But I don't think there's anything necessarily wrong with it. I don't see why we should get upset."

"Who's upset?" Scobie asked.

"You're upset," Quentin said. "You want her to be superhuman."

"Listen," Scobie said.

"His clothes are dirty, but his hands are clean, and you're the best thing that he's ever seen . . ."

"What's it like living at home now?" Matthew asked.

Quentin sighed. "All right. Strange. I can't wait to get to college."

"College isn't so great."

"High school's worse."

"I hate college," Matthew said. "Scobie, how could you have talked me into going?"

"You wanted to go."

"I know. Maybe I'm just having sophomore slump. Do I seem slumped to you?"

"Very."

"I mean, I'm slumped, right?"

"Right."

"College is boring and it's stupid to be bored. There are millions of things to do that aren't boring."

"Like?"

"I don't know. Travelling."

"You both need to fall in love," Scobie said.

Matthew laughed.

"Seriously. Think about it. If you're in love, you can't get bored. Am I right? And you can't worry about things, you know?"

"Sure, I'd like to fall in love," Matthew said. "Turn the record over."

As Scobie approached the Grundig, he thought of the summer nights he and Matthew used to lie in bed listening to the hollow shouts of friends playing kickball on the street, the voices of their parents rising from the garden on the other side of the house, where they sat drinking coffee, a kerosene lamp picking their faces out of the darkness and throwing the rest of the garden into a flickering confusion of shadows. Scobie and Matthew had slept in other rooms, but this was the one Matthew remembered best. Dylan spoke through the speakers once again. Scobie lay down on the carpet. "It's their anniversary."

"What're you talking about?"

"Mom and Dad. It's their anniversary, and that's probably a strange time."

"There's also a full moon," Matthew said.

"Just *listen* to that music. We could

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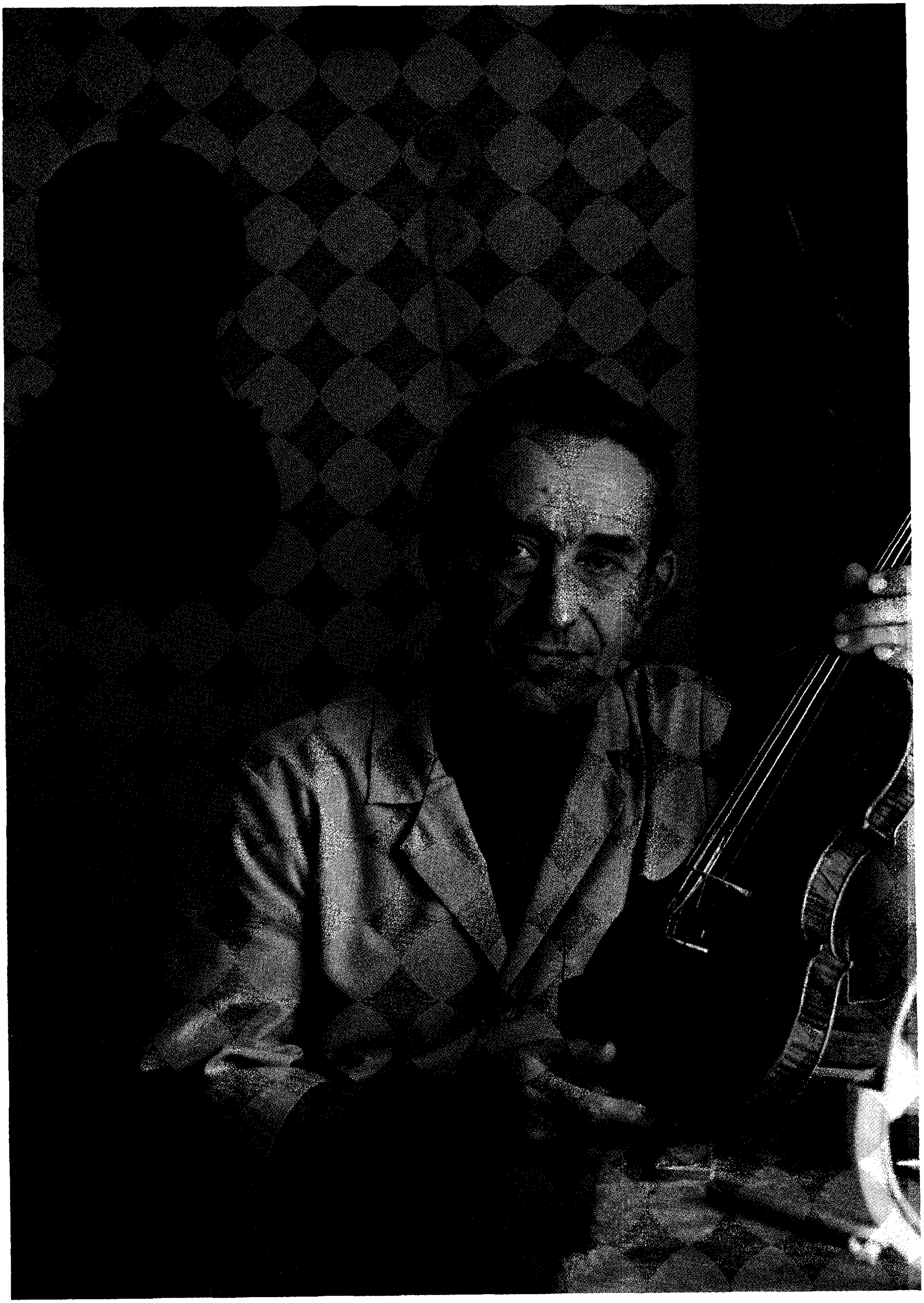

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conquer the world with that music."

"Scobie, you're such a romantic," Matthew said.

"True enough. I believe in the possibility of ecstasy. No doubt about it."

"Your idea of ecstasy is what most people call melancholia," Matthew said.

Quentin was giggling, his hands holding his sides. He sat up, but still could not stop laughing.

"What's so funny?"

"You," Quentin gasped.

"No respect for your elders. That's the trouble with this younger generation."

"Let's go swimming," Matthew said.

"You've lost your mind. It's dark out there."

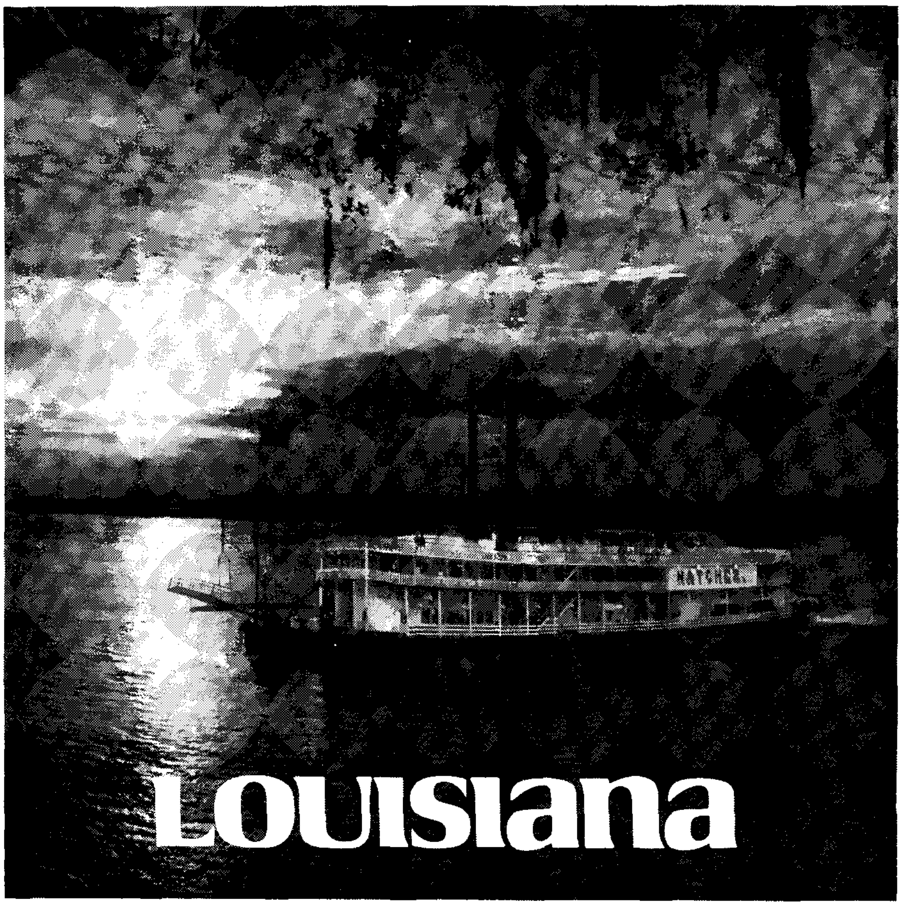
"Come on." Matthew stood, reached down for Scobie's hand. "Swim time."

"That water's *cold*."

Matthew grabbed Scobie's left hand, Quentin his right, and they pulled him to his feet.

"Middle-class children of the world, unite," Matthew said, running for the door. "You have nothing to lose but your guilt."

SLEEP would not come, though Sam imagined islands, the morning light in the room of his childhood, though he recited the names of the girls he had loved in school, the dates of every major nineteenth-century sea battle he could remember. Outside, the rain had given way to a cool, damp breeze that billowed the curtains. Sam lay on his side of the bed and listened to Laura sleep. She breathed deeply, quietly. The shapes in the room, furniture and shadows, flickered like props in an old movie, burning into the darkness a suggestion of so much more than he could see. Sitting up, he rubbed his eyes. The room burst into flames. Blinking, he restored order. Then he slid from the bed, carefully, trying not to wake Laura. She murmured, rolled over, her hands pressed together beneath her cheek. Sam groped for his trousers, pulled them on, picked up his shirt, and tiptoed from the room. He crossed the hallway. The slow fan whirred overhead, blades disturbing the still air, the pattern of red and white tiles, the single crack in the plaster that stretched like a thread from floor to ceiling. Descending into the dim light of the downstairs hallway, Sam felt as if he were rehearsing a movement he would later complete, or completing a movement he had already rehearsed. If he spoke he would hear nothing. The



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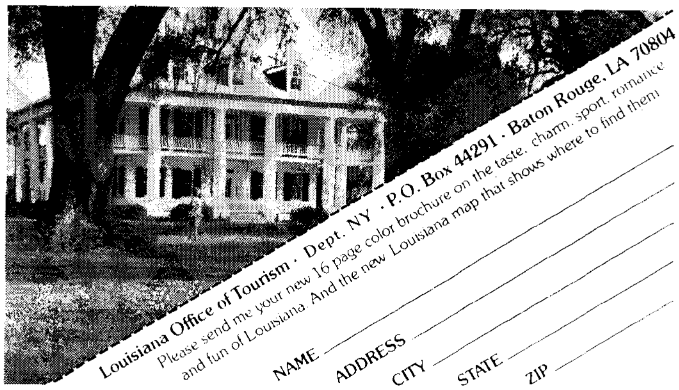

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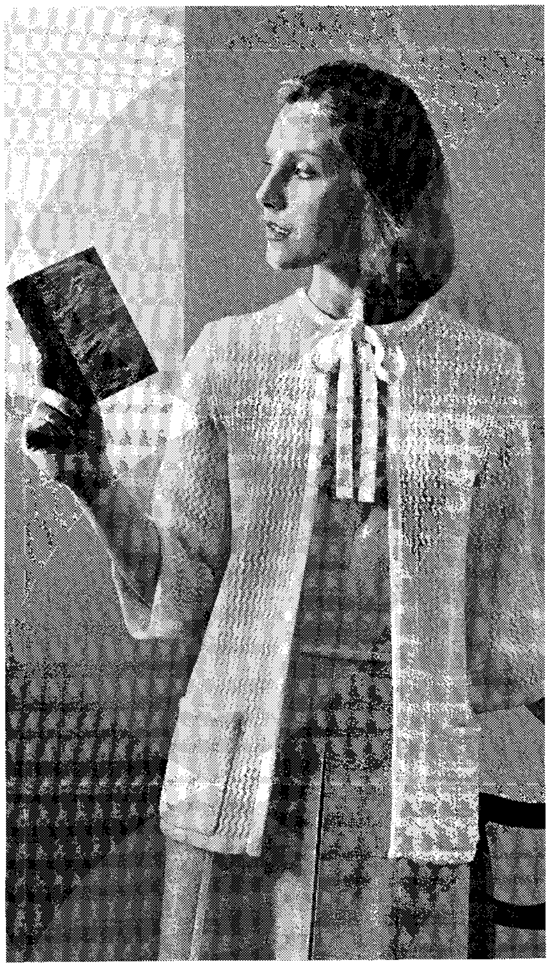

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front door was open, and he could see the swimming pool rippling in moonlight: a thousand white birds. Stepping into his study, he turned on the light, poured himself a large Scotch, and sat at his desk, surrounded by wings and struts, propellers and blueprints. He *did* love Laura, at least as much as he wanted to leave her. How happy he was seemed, at this point, a useless question. He was Laura's husband, she was his wife, they were the parents of their children. Both of them believed in what they were doing. Family was a necessary faith. Within families beauties that perished elsewhere thrived and multiplied.

"Hi, Dad."

Sam looked up, surprised. "Hello, Scobie."

"What're you doing?"

"Oh . . ." Sam glanced around at the aeronautical paraphernalia and shrugged. "Nothing, I suppose." He took a long swallow of Scotch and swirled the ice cubes in his glass, staring intently, hoping he might divine, in the motion and clatter, the essence of the day. "What're you doing up this late?"

"Couldn't sleep," Scobie said. "I kept thinking about that crazy scene at the Embassy tonight."

"Want a drink?"

"No, thanks."

Again, in Scobie's presence, Sam felt light-headed. "Are you having a good time?"

"This summer, you mean?"

Sam nodded, twirling a propeller blade with his forefinger.

"Yes," Scobie said. "Though I kind of miss my girlfriend."

"A special girlfriend?"

"I guess so."

"What's her name?"

"Susan Evans. I met her last fall. She's in New York now. I was thinking of flying back early so I could spend some time with her before school starts."

"Sounds sensible."

"You'd like her a lot, I think."

"I'm sure I would."

"Dad?"

"Yes?"

"Are you and Mom having a fight?"

"Nothing serious," Sam said.

"Is she having an affair with David Nightingale?"

Sam looked up. "What makes you think that?"

"I don't know." Scobie shrugged. "I can't really imagine it."

"Nor can I. He's not her type." Sam tried to smile.

"Probably not."

"Definitely not." Sam stood, poured himself another drink, and sat back down at the desk. "Anything you want from the States?"

"No, thanks. Will you see Nana and Pa?"

"Sure."

Sam thought of his mother, his father, the bizarre mixture of love and resentment that would greet him when he arrived. His room would be waiting for him, unchanged except for the addition of his sons' summer toys and books. He swallowed his drink, feeling the burn of alcohol and nicotine in his throat. Perhaps I'll write Laura a letter, he thought, picturing his desk by the window at home, the desk from which, years ago, he had written Laura his first love letter. But what could he say? "I'm sorry"? He had already done that. He could tell Laura nothing. She probably understood more than he did, anyway. He would only be apologizing to himself for his own failure. Knowledge was memory, he had read in college. Perhaps, writing Laura, he could learn what he had forgotten—why he loved her.

"Dad?"

"Yeah?"

"When you were my age, and falling in love with Mom, did you really feel you were falling in love? You know? Or did it just happen?"

"I fell in love, of course. Nothing just happens. You either want it to happen or you don't."

"But what if you don't know what you want?"

"You feel it."

"What if you don't feel it?"

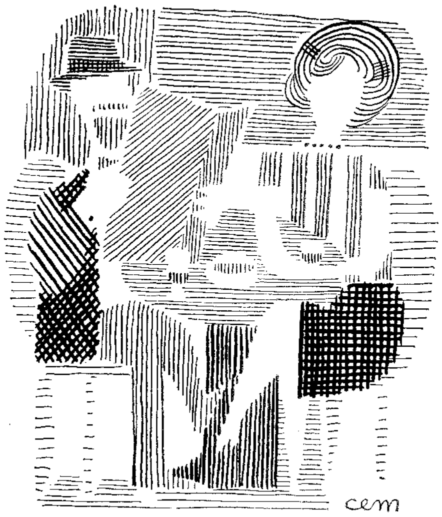
Sam laughed. "Nothing happens."

"But it does. All the time. Day after day."

"I don't know."

"It's a problem." Scobie laughed.

"Scobie old chum, I hate to hassle you. But tell me again. I'm slow. Why



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does Matthew want to leave college?" Sam lit a cigarette.

"Dad, are you all right?"

"Fine. Sure you don't want a drink?"

"No, thanks."

They looked at each other.

"Does he think he's responsible for all the terrible things going on?" Sam asked. "Is that it?"

"Partially, yes."

"But how could he be?"

"Because of who he is—your son."

"That's so bad?"

"In a way, yes. But it's not your fault, Dad."

"My *fault*? What are you talking about?"

"Dad, you're you. White, rich—"

"I'm *not* rich."

"Compared to most people, you are. And you went to Harvard, and your wife went to Wellesley. And you work for the government."

"All I want to do is make an honest living and build my goddam model airplanes," Sam said. "What's wrong with that? You just wait, boyo. It's a bitch."

He stood unsteadily and reached for his glasses. Scobie leaned forward to help.

"I'm all right. Too much to drink, that's all." Sam stared about the room. "You know, I used to think Pa was so strong, but now I look at him nodding in front of that goddam television and think, He's *weak*. He's nothing. Bones and bones. He has no idea why he's alive. Then I look at myself and think, You're not much better, Sam." Moving slowly, careful to appear sober, he turned off the light, then stood with Scobie in the dark room, listening to the drone of an airplane passing overhead. Where was it going? Beirut? London? New York? He could imagine the passengers unbuckling their seat belts, lighting cigarettes, ordering drinks. Soon he would be one of them, flying home.

"I'm your father, Scobie," he said. "That's all." —HENRY BROMELL

•

"Endurance is another problem. Tannhauser is long. And you can't lay back and say 'I'm gonna save myself for the last act' because the second act is the big high point. And not many people know that the Met has restored the coarse parts during Tannhauser's big hymn to Venus in Act Two. It's never been done at the Met before. That means all the other people are singing at top volume and I have to sing over them. It's exhausting, you can bet on that."—*Robert Jones in the News.*

Blame it on this age of permissiveness.

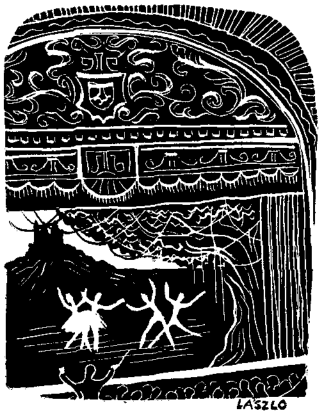
THE THEATRE

REVIVING THE MISANTHROPES

AS a possible corollary to the dictum that nothing is so powerful as an idea whose time has come, one might propose that nothing is so weak as an idea whose time has passed. And this is what I take to be one of the underlying weaknesses of "On the Twentieth Century," the new but very old-fashioned musical comedy at the St. James. It is based on the play "Twentieth Century," by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur (itself based on a play by Charles B. Milholland), and it deliberately courts memories of the celebrated movie of the same name, which starred John Barrymore and Carole Lombard. The play was written almost half a century ago, and its slam-bang, grossly misanthropic humor is, to my taste, as dead as a doornail. The authors of the book and lyrics, Betty Comden and Adolph Green, are careful to stipulate that the action of the musical takes place in the early thirties, and the datedness of the point of view from which the characters are observed could be argued to be intentional, as establishing the authenticity of their conduct; nevertheless, I sense an unbridgeable discrepancy between contemporary modes of feeling (Comden's and Green's as well as my own; they are among the kindliest satirists alive) and the modes of feeling manifested by Hecht and MacArthur.

The contempt for their fellow-human beings that Hecht and MacArthur felt—or, as writers, affected to feel—was an extension in dramatic terms of the revulsion against American customs and manners expressed in journalistic terms by H. L. Mencken. *Homo americanus*, said Mencken, is a boob and deserves to be flimflammed; whoever cheats, lies, and steals in the course of promoting himself at the expense of such a boob is at worst a lovable rogue, and the more lovable rogues we have in our midst the better for civilization—at any rate, the better for Mencken. Farce lends itself readily to this dehumanizing heartlessness by making it an occasion for laughter, but in the present instance the laughter provoked carries with it a strong hint of strain. The fact is that, with a single exception, not one of the major characters in "On the Twentieth Century" is an attractive person; each of them practices some harsh form of emotional blackmail against a chosen victim. The single exception is an elderly woman named Letitia Primrose, who proves to be mad, and it is an indication of the datedness of the book that we are invited to assume that madness is by definition hilarious. Pursuing Mrs. Primrose through the cars of the crack train known as the Twentieth Century (the train is racing from Chicago to New York in sixteen hours), the cast sings, with damnable reiteration, a song whose refrain goes, "She's a nut! She's a nut! She's a nut!"

My reaction to what was no doubt planned as a harmless, rollicking evening in the theatre may be considered grotesquely "heavy;" be that as it may, I offer it in partial explanation of the show's failure. There are plenty of other reasons that the show fails, chief among them being the radical miscasting of John Cullum as the crooked Broadway impresario Oscar Jaffee. Mr. Cullum's strong suit as an actor is his ability to project an air of quiet integrity; here, with dyed black hair and an exaggeration of mannerisms totally at odds with his nature, he has been encouraged to perform a parody of Barrymore parodying Barrymore. Not for a moment is he able to persuade us that he is the king of con men, relishing his skill at outwitting a world of decent simpletons. Nor is Madeline Kahn persuasive as a famous movie star, once Jaffee's mistress and now the mistress of a leading man of incomparable glossy fatuity (a role well played by Kevin Kline, who makes acrobatics fill the place of the lines that haven't been written for him). The score, by Cy Coleman, is unexpectedly ambitious; it seeks to provide more than just a sequence of pretty tunes, but the results are, alas, without much charm. Robin Wagner's set, which consists mostly of exteriors and interiors of the Twentieth Century, are ingenious as well as witty; the costumes, by Florence Klotz, poke agreeable fun at the thirties; and the admirable lighting is by Ken Billington. The director, Hal Prince, has sought to make the show move by prestidigitation—"Now you see it, now you don't!"—but the sad truth is that the show seems to move very slowly indeed. There was no joy in Mudville when mighty Casey struck out, and there is no joy in me when Comden, Green, Coleman, Cullum, Kahn, and Prince strike out, for they are among the most gifted people on Broadway.



—BRENDAN GILL

OFF BROADWAY

The Gallery

TINA HOWE'S "Museum," at the Public, is an enchanting show—a comedy set in a municipal art museum during the last day of " 'The Broken Silence,' a special exhibit of the Contemporary American Wing." The play is itself a collage of words and characters and action, as various spectators drift in and comment on the art works on view. These include, most spectacularly, a clothesline hung with dressed dummies, with a basket of clothespins beneath it, and some glass display cases containing found objects—mostly feathers and animal skeletons. And, of course, there is no lack of invisible paintings on invisible walls. At the opening, an announcement over a loudspeaker tells us that a picture at the Uffizi Gallery, in Florence, has been shot and destroyed; and, indeed, the whole play has an elusive, valedictory air about art—all art, that is, and maybe even Western civilization, if it comes to that. A girl meditates on the possibility that museums will disappear as structures and people will become the view; a woman comes in, looks at the pictures, starts to cry, and leaves; a number of bewildered people wander through, searching for hooked rugs and quilts. The characters' response to the modernist movement in American art, as here displayed, ranges from the ecstasy of three girls, one of whom actually hugs the dummies on the clothesline, through the wild laughter of a trio of middle-aged women, to the downright savagery of a number of spectators at the end. But Miss Howe's airborne play is anything but dogged or

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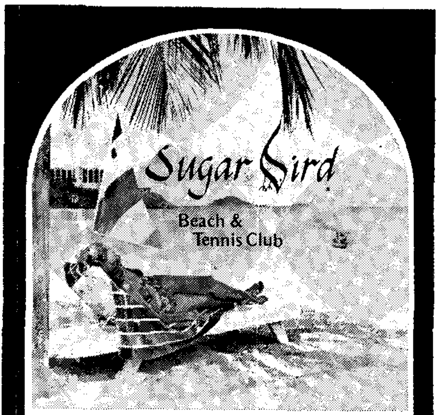
"theme-y" or insistent. It has plenty of wit and humor, and no idea appears to be emphasized over any other. Each successive incident builds and then dissipates, yet the play takes shape and holds firm.

There is considerable doubling and tripling among the actors to portray the forty characters in the show. Joel Brooks and Jeffrey David Pomerantz are very funny as two aesthetic young men, experienced gallerygoers both, appraising and deploring, and Mr. Brooks is also effective as the creator of the clothesline arrangement. Lynn Milgrim and Karen Ludwig play two fashionable young women all but ignoring their surroundings as they sit on a bench and gossip about people and the difficulty of avoiding synthetic fabrics these days. Dan Hedaya is very menacing as a silent, mysterious figure who slinks in and out. Jean-Pierre Stewart and Frederikke Meister are endearing as a French couple, chattering continuously and rarely lifting their eyes from their catalogues. Kathleen Tolan, Robyn Goodman, and Kathryn Grody are charming as the enraptured girls. In the climactic scene, a freaky young woman (Dianne Wiest) takes one of the found objects out of a display case, to the outraged screams of the onlookers, clasps it to her bosom, and then bursts into a speech of grisly revelation about the working methods of her friend the artist. Under the guidance of the museum guard (Larry Bryggman) who is in charge of the gallery—and, in a sense, of the play—she returns the object, and she ends up on her knees before another case, where a miracle of sorts takes place.

Miss Wiest and Mr. Bryggman are especially good, but all the actors are good—those I haven't mentioned as well as those I have. As for the performance as a whole, it couldn't have gone better, thanks to the direction of Max Stafford-Clark. All is clear; the humor, which could so easily have got out of hand, is always in key; and the emotions, big and small, are believable. Admirable set, costumes, and lighting, by Robert Yodice, Patricia McGourty, and Jennifer Tipton, respectively.

THE Circle Repertory Company's production of "Lulu," which has just wound up a short run at the Sheridan Square, was an adaptation of two well-known plays by Frank Wedekind (1864-1918)—"Earth Spirit" and "Pandora's Box"—about sexual depravity and general decadence in Europe before the First World War, as embodied in a beautiful and deceptive



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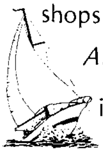

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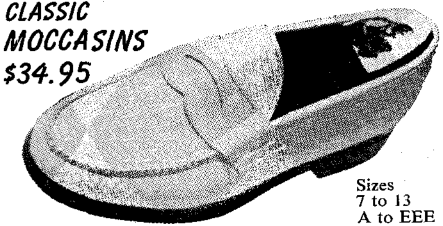

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young wanton and her victims. The show, in a loose sort of way, took the form of a circus. There was circus music between the scenes, and circus lighting. A lion tamer came out in the prologue, cracking his whip and introducing the company as animals—the snake, of course, being Lulu herself. She is as heedless and grabby as a delinquent child, and the story is concerned with those who use her and are used by her through the years, until she gets her final comeuppance at the hands of Jack the Ripper. The idea of casting pretty (and capable) Trish Hawkins—so innocent-looking, so blond and blue-eyed and childish-seeming—in the lead was an interesting one; after all, she would be captivating to all those rakes (m. and f.) who keep referring to her as an angel. In fact, most of the ideas were good enough, but the company, under Rob Thirkield's direction, had nowhere near the ability or experience to assume the searing, gleeful, cynical style that is absolutely essential to this kind of German play. As doors opened and closed, as lovers hid in closets or under tables, we could have been watching a maladroit Feydeau farce, but one with sudden suicides and deaths and disembowelments. How lucky that our introduction to Friedrich Dürrenmatt—as foreign, in his way, as Wedekind—was at the hands of Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt, in "The Visit"! —EDITH OLIVER

•

This year, Sullivan said, the high pressure moved eastward to a position over the Rocky Mountains and extending up into northwest Canada.

This resulted in low pressure along the coast that pulled the storms, forming in the central Pacific, into California.

"The number and persistence of these storms is unusual," Sullivan said.

He said the high-pressure ridge moved so far north, high up over the Arctic and Alaska, that it broke in two.

This resulted in low pressure along the coast that pulled the storms, forming in the central Pacific, into California.

"The number and persistence of these storms is unusual," Sullivan said.—*Los Angeles Times.*

Must be the wind. Still can't hear you.

•

The construction of a low-income through a tunnel to an emergency Episcopal School on the upper West Side was cleared yesterday by a federal judge who ruled that the project had obtained a proper environmental impact statement.

—*The News.*

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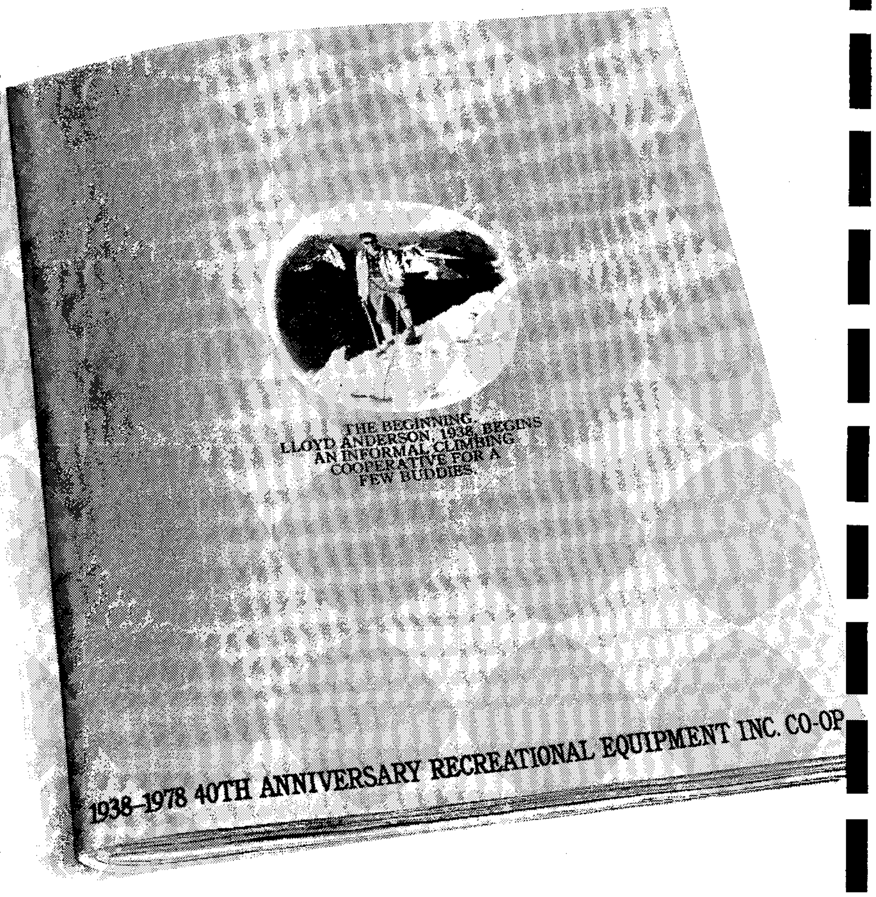
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ISMAILIA REVISITED

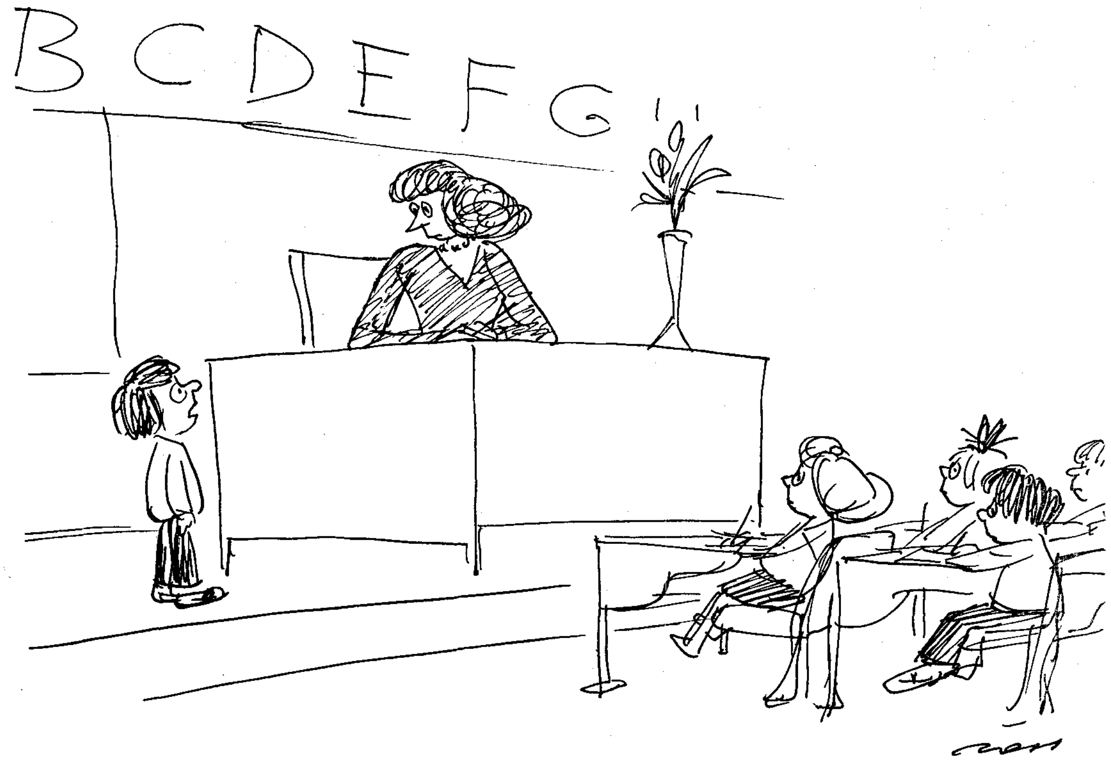
ON Christmas Day of 1977, I was part of the first Israeli Peace Mission to Egypt—to Ismailia, where I was born. Four days before, I had no suspicion of this. On an El Al flight from London to Tel Aviv, my husband—Abba Eban—and I had travelled in the company of Prime Minister Menachem Begin, who was returning home from his talks earlier that month with President Carter. Begin and my husband were deep in political conversation when suddenly the Prime Minister turned toward me and said, "You were born in Ismailia. Wouldn't you like to see it again?" "Of course," I answered.

Thirty years of disconnection from Egypt dropped with a thud. The implacable inaccessibility of the land of my birth to *any* Israeli since the 1948 war was over. I was stunned by my unexpected good fortune. After all, as a member of the Knesset, my husband belongs to Mr. Begin's Opposition. Herein lay both the subtlety and the generosity of the gesture.

Four days later, as one of the twenty-nine members of the peace mission, I was wearing an Israeli tag on my coat with my name in Hebrew lettering, addressing me from the airport at Lod to the Egyptian military base of Abu Suweir, near the Suez Canal, and also an Egyptian tag in Arabic handwriting, to take effect when, at Abu Suweir, I stepped into one of the four Egyptian helicopters that would pick up the Egyptians and Israelis who were to work together for the next day and a half. We were heading for President Anwar Sadat's residence in Ismailia. Now I was crossing two alphabets and two regions in the span of a takeoff and what seemed an almost immediate landing, some forty minutes later. We were all dropping the ballast of enmity from our lives, and, because Mrs. Begin was ill, I was to be the first woman from Israel to land on Egyptian soil.

As we came down, amid clouds of ochre sand churned up by our jet engines, I realized that I had not had adequate time aboard the aircraft to survey the full length of the receiving line at Abu Suweir. There were effusive handshakes and smiles from those among the Army brass, Cabinet members, and diplomats who were known to one another, through the press and television, from past polemics across the frontier and on the world stage. And when the firm asphalt of the runway was beneath my feet I caught sight of a female silhouette. Above the tweed coat and the black fur collar was a woman's smile. I recognized Aziza Hussein, some twenty years after our last encounter. She had been my friend at the American University in Cairo, where we were both doing graduate work in social sciences. I had run into her some ten years later in Washington—also an utter surprise—when her husband, Ahmed, was the Egyptian Ambassador to the United States and my husband was the Israeli Ambassador to the United States. We met at a tea that Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower gave at the White House for wives of heads of mission. Our husbands were serving in parallel capacities for our countries, but she and I did not permit ourselves any contact beyond the conventional civilities that each of us assumed would be acceptable to the other. Now, in Ismailia, I gasped at the thoughtful planning that had achieved, at such short notice, the nearest possible simple human contact. Everybody was calling her Dr. Aziza.

We soon found ourselves escaping the assaults of the world mass media on the two eminent peacemakers. We knew they would be sitting for hours in the conference room of Sadat's residence, around the dark mahogany table I had glimpsed, which held an orderly row of green leather-bound memo pads crested with the gold eagle of the Egyptian Republic and bearing a blue repeat of the crest on every page. A young chamberlain, Rauf Abdin, with a decoration on his lapel which turned out to be from Togo, came to introduce himself, in English, and say that—among other concerns—he was in charge of my visit. Did I have any special wishes? In view of the security problems, I thought I had better limit my tour to the minimum. "Yes," I said. "I would like to see the house in which I grew up, which I left in my teens; and I would like twenty postcards to send to my friends, mostly in America." Obviously, I could not yet send any to Israel, though I was right across the water. I also wanted to buy some Egyptian stamps. I was being very modest. Abdin said that he would see to everything on my return from a small rest house on Lake Tim-



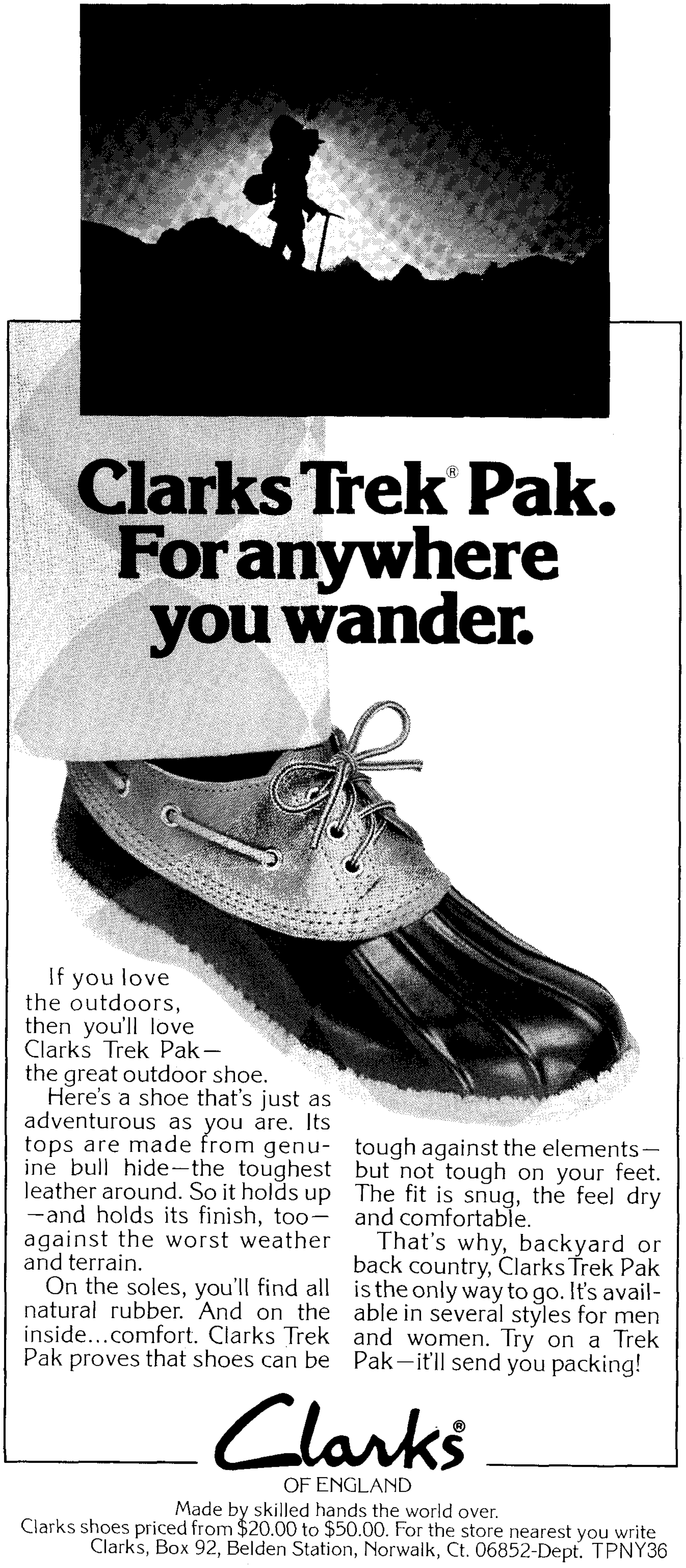
"Miss Jones, may I go home and watch television?"

sah, a few miles along the Canal, where Aziza was taking me next. We passed through a grove of tall eucalyptuslike trees with furry leaves. They gave the light a greenish hue. The French administrators of the Canal used to call this place the Bois de Boulogne. It suddenly looked to me like a stage set—of trees and of huge posters of Sadat, sometimes in uniform, sometimes in civilian clothes, placed at optically intersecting angles. These extended into the deeper parts of the grove, just as sounds on the stage would have echoes. It was as if that world were all his and the next act of the play would be a monologue.

AZIZA and I were driven in a black car to the rest house, an old hunting lodge from French-colonial days. We sat on a flagstone terrace at the edge of the water listening to each other and to the lapping waves. Only two days before, she said, she had been sitting at the Mena House Hotel, near the Pyramids, where the small Israeli Preparatory Mission for the Ismailia conference was staying. She had told Egyptian friends that all over Cairo everybody was talking about the Israelis. Could somebody point out the Israelis? I felt as if we were from some other planet.

And then she had been asked to be off to Ismailia to meet me upon my arrival. There was perfect symmetry between her situation and mine in the surprise and the speed of adjustment. There she was, among members of her government and ours; and we were both touching history. Although I am Jewish and she is Muslim, we had both had a convent education as our primary schooling. We compared notes about ourselves, our friends, our teachers—some now dead; our people, our countries. The orbit was getting broader—very different from those times in Washington when she introduced me apprehensively to her husband, the Ambassador, and I introduced her to mine, and we settled for talk about the weather and nothing else.

It was cold in the sun, and we sat in our coats. We were offered alternately small glasses of guava juice and hot Turkish coffee. I asked Aziza about her title of "doctor." She said that she was president of the Egyptian Family Planning Association in Cairo, a voluntary agency, and that because it was made up of many doctors, the people now called her "doctor" as well. She was amused. She had done field work with volunteers in the village of Saindyoun, starting with child care and go-



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ing on to mother care, at which stage one could talk to some of the women about the spacing of births. The government had twenty-four hundred family-planning clinics. Her agency complemented them, and she worked closely with Mrs. Sadat. The birthrate had recently come down by six per cent. If the trend could be continued, they would know they were on the right track, she said. The great domestic problem for Egypt was the population explosion. Take Cairo, which had a population of nine million. Unless there was both birth control and population diffusion, it would be a monstrous city of twenty-two million by the year 2000. Sadat himself had used these statistics in conversation with Begin. Aziza was now president of the Central Council of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, chosen from ninety-one countries. She had worked for the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women from 1962 to 1976. She asked me if I had any specific civic activity. I said I was president of the Israel Cancer Association. We were both involved with fateful modern issues. There were moments of silence, which the gentle lapping of the waves helped, or perhaps created. Although we had been given an international all-clear for uninhibited talk, it seemed that we needed to follow our own inner timing in recapturing a true harmony. The reversal had happened too quickly, too suddenly—too much like some unbelievable caprice of the mind.

A huge gray dredger was posted along the east bank of the Canal, and on the horizon I again saw the two slabs of the First World War Memorial of Djebel Mariam, commemorating soldiers fallen in the area. At the point where the Canal enters Lake Timsah, we noticed a ship's upper deck and black funnel gliding behind the sand dunes. It slowly emerged into full view. I found myself in discourse from the past: "Here is the motor launch that will bring the pilot to the ship for the Canal transit from Ismailia to Suez." The workings of the Suez Canal traffic, with two shifts of pilots over the fifteen-hour trip from Port Said to Suez, suddenly became familiar again. The headquarters of the old Canal Company—now called the Authority—were always at Ismailia. They used to be in a one-story building separated by a large lawn from Quai Muhammad Ali and adorned with a band of elaborate gingerbread carving under the roof and its supporting wooden pillars. I noticed that after all that time

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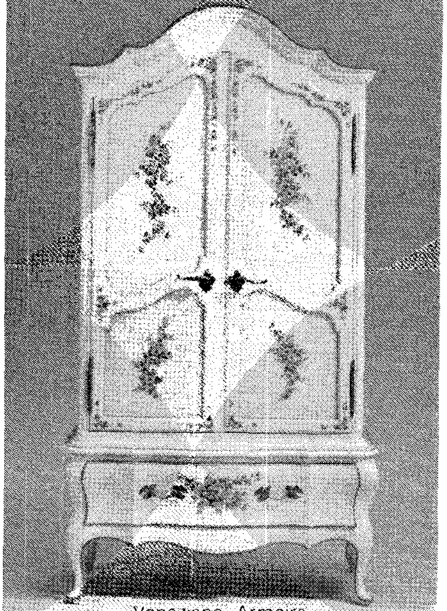

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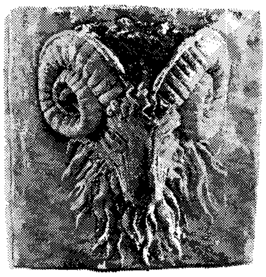

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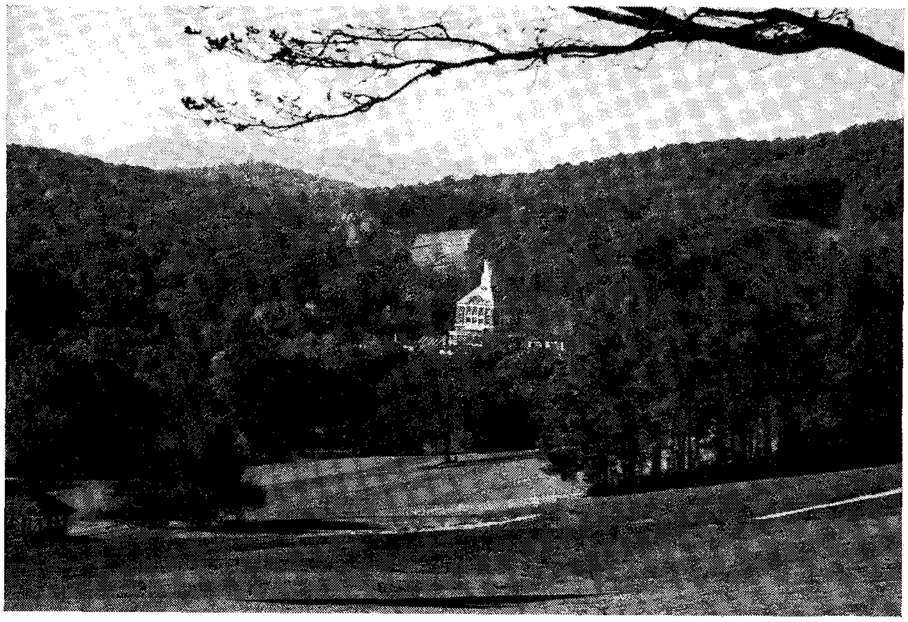
half of the Suez Canal personnel's houses were still painted beige and terra-cotta and the other half a pale-green and white, as I had known them in my childhood. Today, the administration is housed in a modern eleven-story cube with a perfectly flush exterior and what seems to be a glass-cage observatory on top. The staff used to be totally European, mostly French. It is now Egyptian. I reflected that this was the most decisive political achievement in Egypt since Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, in July of 1956. The Canal must "for sure"—to use Sadat's favorite expression—have undergone substantial dredgings and deepenings to accommodate the great tonnages of our days. In my time, a twenty-thousand-ton ship sailing through it was a big event, talked about in the town.

So many details now seemed to come into my view, faster than memory could corroborate. I was embarrassed to ask, to compare, to be nostalgic, to talk of the time when my father was consulting engineer to the Dutch company—P. Bos, of Dordrecht—that then carried out the dredgings. I knew it would seem funny if in the midst of all the political tumult I now asked to see the electric station put up for the Canal by a Swiss company with which my father had been associated, or the Al-Ahram electric-bulb factory, created by the same company. In fact, any mention of the company's name was now greeted with a blank expression. People here were concerned with politics and not with nostalgia. My point in mentioning this was that it had been one attempt to create an indigenous Egyptian industry for Egypt's own market. In retrospect, it seems odd that before the Second World War the British, instead of encouraging exports, persuaded the Egyptians to levy export duties on locally manufactured products. (I remembered the endless experiments that my father carried on at home. He used to bring the local sand to a very high temperature in a platinum cup to check the suitability of the sand for the making of glass.) Now the Canal traffic was at an average of sixty ships a day, with a high of eighty-seven ships. These and other bits of local color I learned from a bright-yellow leaflet put out by the Canal Authority, in keeping with modern information techniques.

As we talked, Aziza remarked that for security reasons the area of the Canal around Ismailia would be closed to small ships that night. I remembered the black waters at night, with nothing visible except the flickering red lights of rocking buoys. The precautions taken



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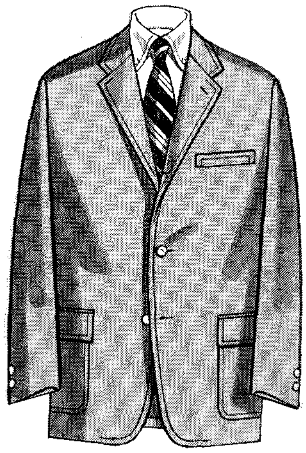

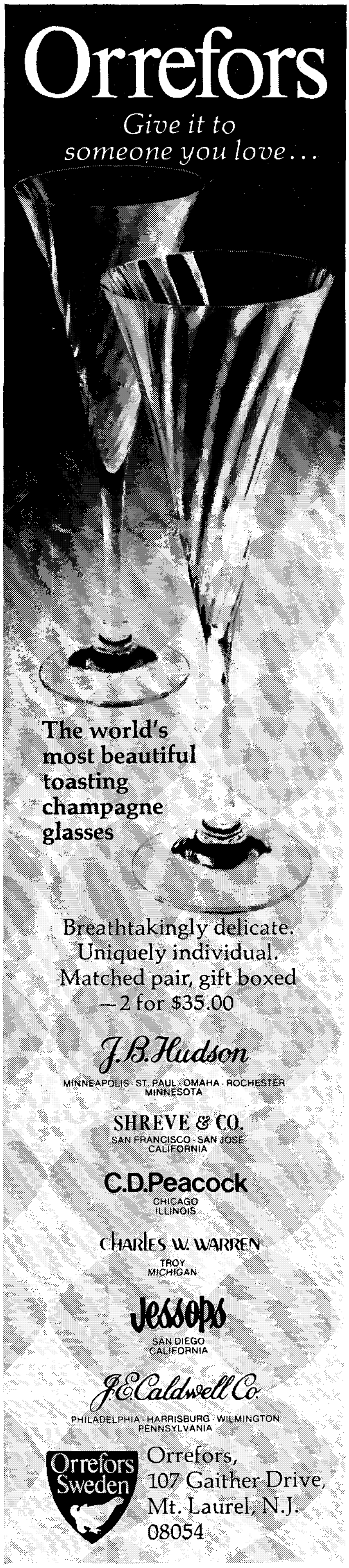
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to protect us were maximal, but I would never have thought of that one, I realized, though it made perfect sense. All that would be needed was one little rocket aimed at the city from a passing ship. I was surprised at my own surprise, because I thought I knew a good deal about security rules. I suddenly remembered one of my husband's official visits. It was in Brussels, where our Ambassador's wife had given a luncheon for me, to which came Gilberte Eyskens, the wife of the Prime Minister, and Marie-Claire Harmel, the Foreign Minister's wife. When we left the Embassy, we saw Belgian soldiers pointing their rifles at the upper windows of the building. There were many more soldiers today all over Ismailia, and many policemen as well. The city looked strange to me in this new armament. It had enlisted every method of self-defense. Some of the soldiers guarding us would look away from us, watching the landscape's every move, and others would look at us, watching our every move. Security here was an elaborate construction of inner circles and outer circles. It had to encompass everything, in the minutest detail: speed in moving, hierarchies, individual roles. Security speaks all the time in the language of tragedy averted. If there is no real political content, it borders on the melodramatic. Here the danger was not a theatrical figment; it was real. Here was embodied the truce of the leaders during the diplomatic convolutions of the negotiators, formulators, and articulators. The leaders had to be great actors for great roles. Diplomacy was in everyone's mind in whatever one did or said in Ismailia that day. Simply being there was like watching a bomb being dismantled. There was no actual fear, but the threat was always there.

AT about one o'clock, Aziza and I went back to Sadat's residence for the President's luncheon. It was not only Christmas Day but also Sadat's birthday. There were nineteen of us Israelis and Egyptians intermingled. Begin and Sadat faced each other across the center of the table. Sadat had Vice-President Husni Mubarak on his right and Prime Minister Mamduh Salem on his left; the Israeli Minister of Defense, Ezer Weizman, sat next to the Vice-President. Begin, opposite, had Moshe Dayan on his right and General Muhammad Gamasy, the Egyptian Minister of War, on his left. I sat next to Gamasy; on my left was the outgoing Egyptian Foreign Minister, Butros Ghali, an erudite Copt, a member of a minority group who had become a Minister of State. They called him Pierre in intimate circles. Weizman and Gamasy had a forthright style, as befits the military. The diplomats had to be different, certainly not so direct. Weizman was elegant down to his blue tie of soft silk. Gamasy, in uniform, wore his medals. On the walls, framed photographs of Sadat were interspersed with ornamentally illuminated verses of the Koran. The food was excellent: fish, meat, stuffed vine leaves, dessert, and fruit. The china was crested in gold over dark green. The toasts were drunk in orange juice, because the Muslim religion prohibits alcohol. First came Begin's birthday toast to Sadat, right at the start of the meal. For a few moments, we could not grasp why he should start the proceedings, but as soon as he mentioned the birthday it all became clear. The more formal toasts came toward the end of the meal, when Sadat stated that this was the happiest day of his life.

President Carter was going to call from Plains, Georgia, to extend peace wishes on that Christmas Day. The two leaders went to the phone like twins to be greeted together. They came back without having spoken a word to Carter, because the telephone connection was poor. They had spent despairing minutes shouting "*Allo!*" into an unresponding instrument.

The footmen wore black suits and white gloves. When I later asked Abdin, the young chamberlain, if it was still the custom for those in attendance in the household to wear the white djellabah with the red sash and red fez, he said that it was, but that "something special" had been wanted on this occasion. Sadat, who eats only one meal a day, did not touch any food. Each of us had a printed menu, as is customary on state occasions. Its glossy cover was done in delicate red and green arabesques, and when we got up from the table I took mine with me, because of the date and place printed on it. I even stooped to the level of a souvenir hunter and asked my ministerial neighbors to autograph their place cards, written in large, lush Arabic calligraphy.

Now and then, there was a silence that nobody made any effort to relieve. It was as if you heard the leaders' minds ticking on either side of the table, each in brief solitary thought, using the meal hour to the utmost in order to put his thinking in better focus—each no doubt groping for some extra measure of inspiration or inventiveness or strategy to make his policy or interests acceptable to the other side, and also to his own colleagues and his own people. The rest of us gave the floor to the two central figures and made our conversations light and at times fragmented, so as not to miss anything that might take place at the center. For small talk, Mordechai Hod, who had been the chief of the Israeli Air Force in the Six-Day War, praised the use of Boeings for overnight cargo flights to Europe. Four Boeings had left Lod the previous night, he said, entirely filled with flowers for sale in the Christmas trade in Europe the next morning. After President Carter had failed to get through, Dayan mentioned the failure of the sound during the candidates' debate in the American Presidential campaign of 1976. He added, "Imagine what would have been said if that had happened in Israel." It was a gallant apology for both Israeli and Egyptian telephones.

AFTER lunch, Aziza and I sat on the front lawn of Sadat's residence, in wicker armchairs, and as we sipped more Turkish coffee Abdin appeared again. It turned out that he was one of eight chamberlains who made up the Presidential Cabinet. I spotted the Great Chamberlain, who heads them all. He was referred to as Mr. Teymour; the title of Pasha has now been abolished. His father had been chamberlain to King Farouk's father, Fuad. He himself had served briefly under Farouk. Now, naturally, he was serving under President Sadat; he was dapper, gray-haired, courteous in his French phraseology.

Abdin said that the car was waiting to take me to the house of my childhood, on the Place Champollion—its identity unknown to any officials till my arrival. They were all from Cairo, and I seemed to be more familiar with Ismailia than any of them were. Abdin kindly produced a sheet of one-piastre stamps with a hundred gray pictures of Ramses, like mini-Warhol duplications. That was all he could find for me, because the post office was not open. Nor were there any postcards to be had.

I had rehearsed to myself how I would ask the people living in the house to let me see the room that had belonged to each member of my family. I would look through the row of windows onto the garden, stand in front of the fireplace in the main sitting room, and stroll through the two kitchens (for my mother kept a kosher household, and we had both a meat kitchen and a dairy one). I would tell the people in the house not to worry if it was not at its tidiest. Would they

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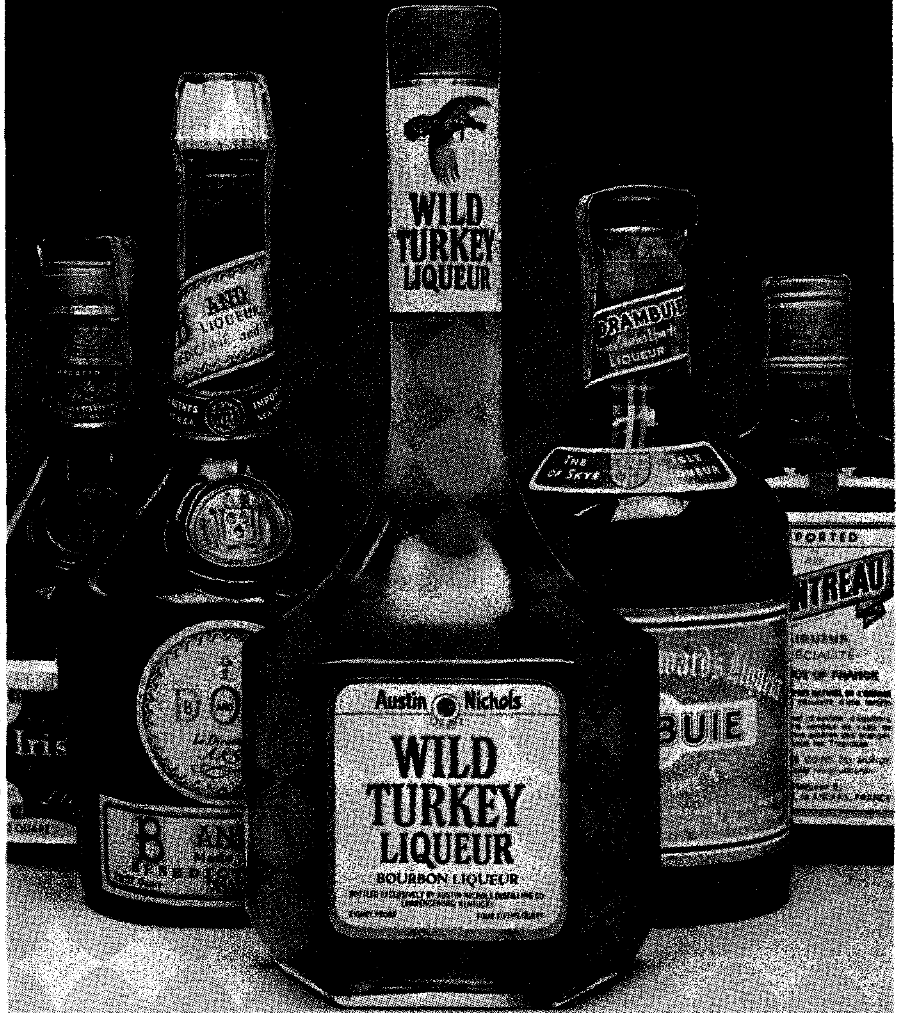

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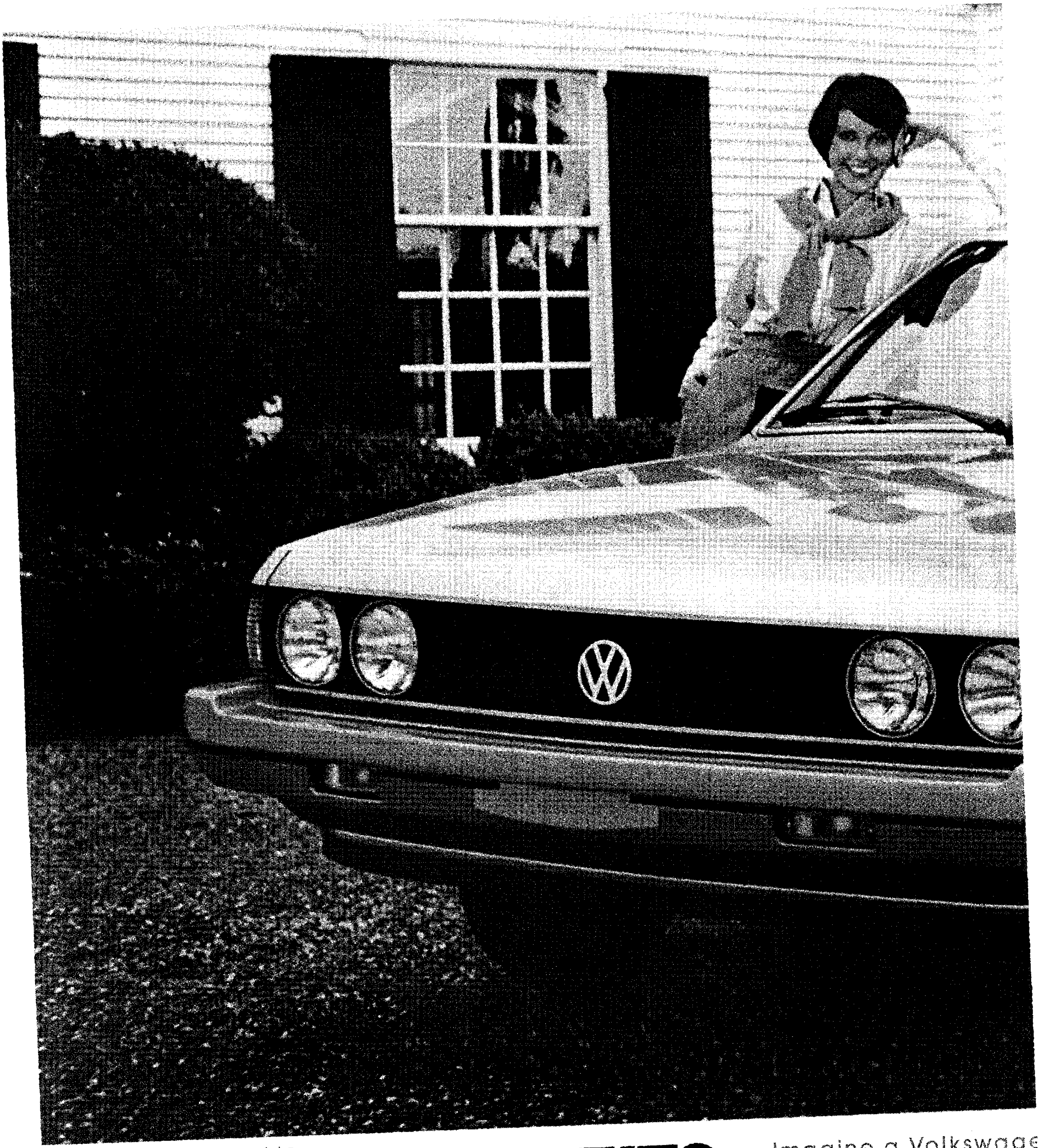

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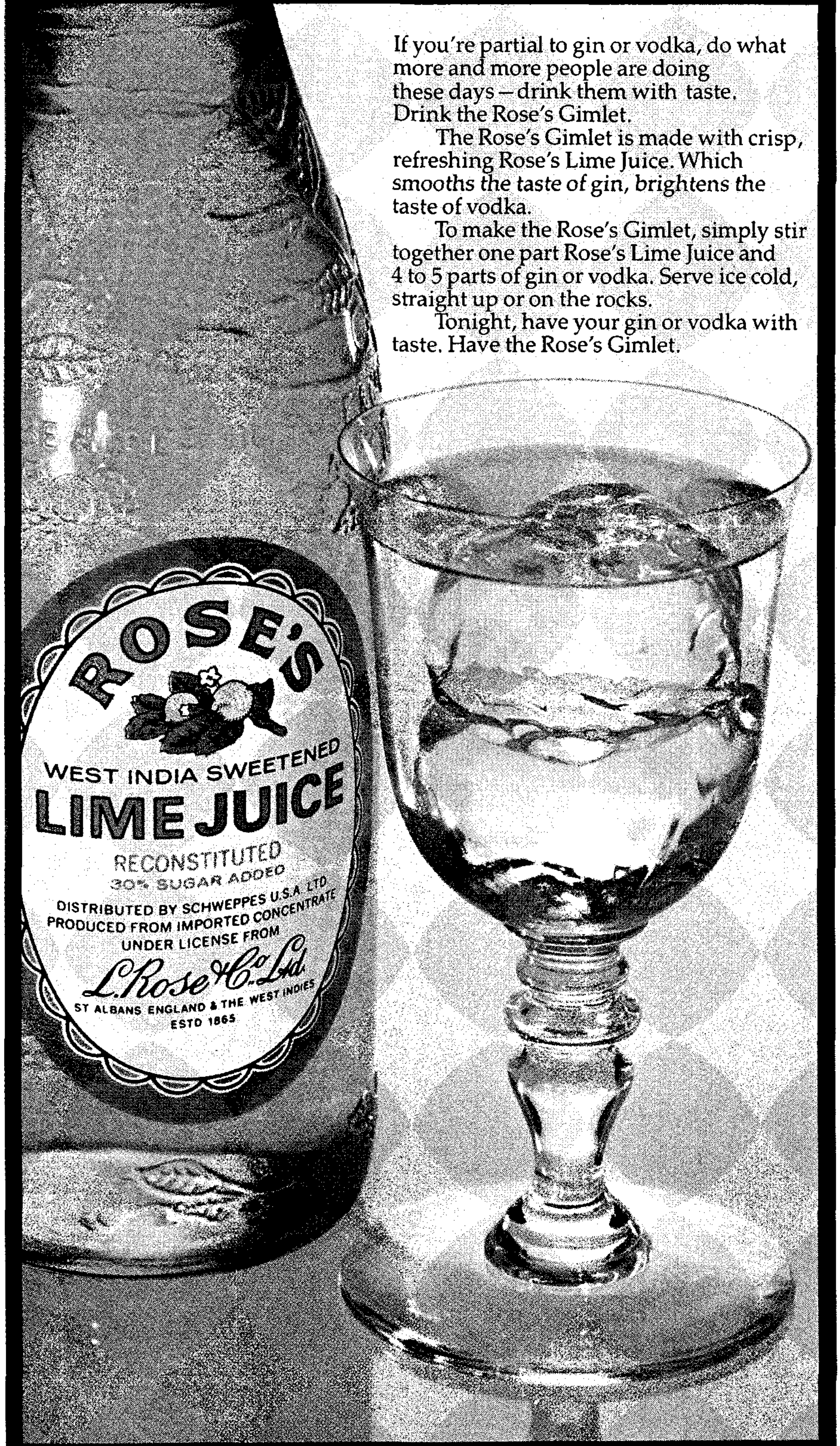

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reject my plea to enter? I doubted it. The East makes a cult of hospitality. How would I handle it all?

The three security cars behind mine stopped in front of the house. A watchman was sitting on a stool near the front door. I saw that the key was in my security man's hands, and I thought this a strange omen of ownership. I stepped in. Suddenly, a visual pallor blanked out my colorful expectations. Sandy rubble, flaking paint, floorless rooms, stones lying chaotically around—a place deprived of any human content. I wanted to gaze at the garden again from the upper floor, but I could not make any headway. Every inch of parquet was gone. A muted light suffused a scene of destruction. I was just about to stand on tiptoe in order to see beyond the ballustrade of the upper veranda, but there was no time for the mental command to pass from brain to toes. A gray brick house was now facing me across the gaping space. Where were the mango trees and the papayas? It was as if an unkind soul had projected some slides on those yellowed walls as a private illustration, to rub it in for me: confronting me was the damage of time and of three wars. I remembered Proust's soaking of his madeleine in his herb tea and the unfolding to him, by association, of the world of his childhood and the memories of a secluded, intimate, genteel age. The experience was quite unlike this. Here my world was exposed, open, public. Soon those who accompanied me became impatient and bored by the dilapidated walls. I walked out, and felt a dissolution of tenderness. I was not nostalgic anymore. The new reality had superseded old memories.

IT was three-thirty when we returned to the President's mansion. The reporters were gathered in the adjoining courtyard, as they had been all through the morning, photographing us through their zoom lenses. They looked like an international army of expectant fathers hoping they would be able to give away cigars: they were naïvely waiting for peace to emerge as quickly as the dialogue had started. Aziza was leaving for Cairo; she, like me, had originally been told that the Israeli mission would go back home the same evening. Instead, it turned out that we would be in for a long day and a night session. (When she came the next morning, ready for all eventualities, we were leaving.) Before long, the world press and the Israeli newspapermen were taking buses to Cairo to glimpse its night life and its souks, open now to

Israelis for the first time in thirty years. Only the official party and two journalists stayed behind, in the government guesthouse. It used to be called La Résidence, and was the home of the presidents of what was lengthily called the Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez. In colonial times, in their appointed sequence, they were Le Comte de Serionne, le Marquis de Voguë, and last of all M. François Charles-Roux. They stayed there only in winter and spring, steering clear of hot weather. Now red-white-and-black Egyptian flags coupled with navy ones bearing the white emblem of the Suez Canal Authority decorated the iron front gates.

At the corner of the building, we passed a wooden arch painted light blue and festooned with ropes of electric bulbs, one of many bedecking the city to hail the October victory in 1973 and the opening of the Canal by Sadat. The victory boast, minutes away from where we stayed, seemed an anachronism, not to mention an odd form of hospitality; but counteracting it were big cutouts of white doves opposite Sadat's residence, which were the first welcome signs we saw when we arrived. Later, beyond the suspension bridge over the Sweet Water Canal, we discovered with great delight some arches bearing quotations in Hebrew under their Arabic text. Across the street from our heavily guarded gates was the embankment of the Sweet Water Canal, running the length of the city and supplying drinking water to a population of perhaps a quarter of a million—a place I had once known as a small town of fifteen thousand.

The Israeli leaders were no longer in sight. The legal people sat nearby, waiting for their hour. Every now and then, one of the senior Israeli officers accompanying Begin would pass through the corridor with a rolled map in his hand. I remember sitting for what seemed an endless time in one or the other of two Presidential drawing rooms. They were extremely high-ceilinged, but cold if you were immobile. In them were Oriental rugs, good but well worn. Scattered around both drawing rooms were marble-topped Louis XVI chests. There were parquet floors, and walls panelled with plaster moldings. Ropes of crystal sparkled from a chandelier lit at the center. In fact, it was mini-France except for a Mashrabiya screen behind curved curtains separating the two drawing rooms. There were pictures of Sadat everywhere around us.

On the same side of the house as the two drawing rooms was a study with a small library containing nothing but French books, all of them about Egypt or the Canal. One book was immensely big, almost a metre square, lying flat in the recess of a breakfront. Moshe Dayan spotted it the next morning before we all left. He and I leafed through it together, with some Egyptians in attendance. It was dated 1818, and spelled Cairo in French with a K: Le Kaire. It called one of the Obelisks Cleopatra's Needle. A Colonel Jacobin, cartographer of Napoleon's Engineer Corps, had put that book together.

Among drawings of the Pyramids, Karnak, and Memphis were some bas-reliefs with processions of stylized figures, the central female figure presenting a mirror held up in front of her. Other drawings had a marvellously delineated eye in total occupation of the mirror. The only telephone was in the study, and during the evening, in the midst of an electricity failure, the editor of the Jerusalem *Post* occupied himself by shouting to his correspondent at the Mena House, trying to overcome a bad connection. He was incensed at being the only newspaperman who had stayed in Ismailia—just in case. The power had gone off while I was looking at Ferdinand de Lesseps' room, now maintained as a tiny museum behind the study. De Lesseps was the builder of the Suez Canal, which was opened by the Empress Eugénie in 1869. The room contained a steel bed with a thick netting, so dusty from age that it was brownish, dropping from a rectangular steel frame above. (In my childhood, we used to sleep under mosquito nets.)

In another small room were memorabilia of Europe: a needlepoint embroidery under glass on the wall, a white marble clock with Roman numerals, topped by the bronze bust of a woman with her head turned romantically sidewise—perhaps a subconscious association with ancient Egyptian art, in which faces were usually drawn in flat profile. There were a pair of decanters, card games based on Egyptian antiquities, knickknacks, and a Bible: Old and New Testaments. De Lesseps' carriage was rather eerily displayed in a glass case on an elevation in the front garden.

A flashlight that had taken me through this bout of sightseeing was

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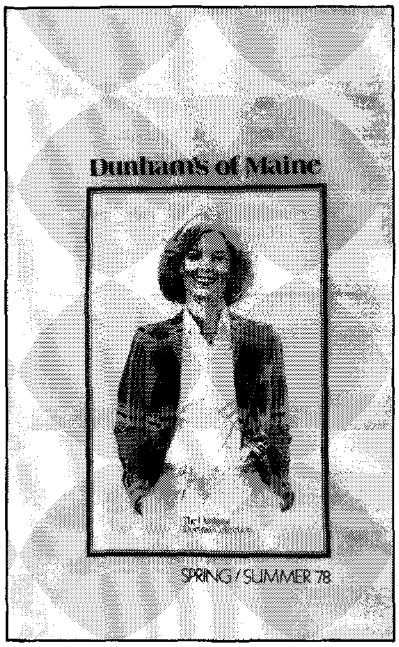

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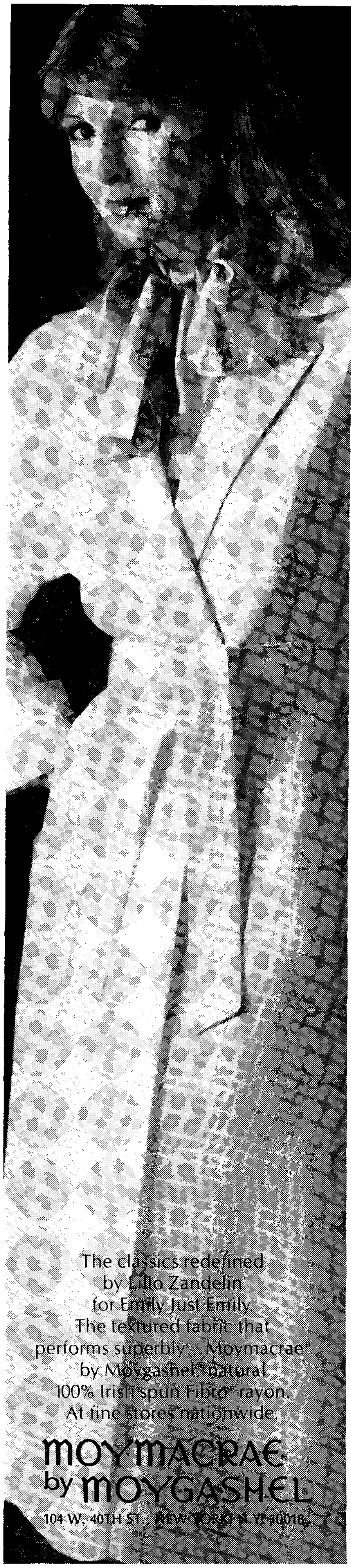

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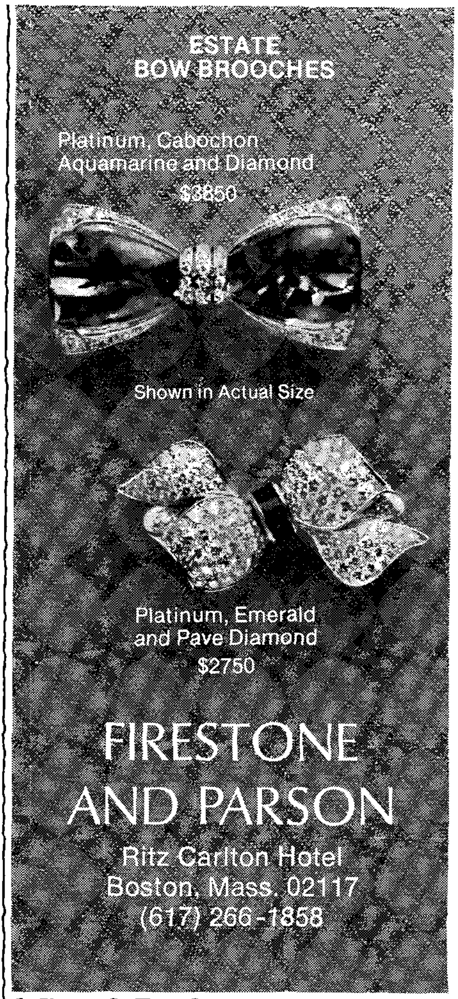
now dwindling, so I went back to the drawing room, hugging my coat in the dark, and feeling tired. Yet none of us who were waiting in the Antechamber of Peace permitted ourselves to leave the room. Our Egyptian guides were going to and fro. They brought in a portable Lux lamp and candlesticks. A little later, the young chamberlain appeared with gift-wrapped offerings to commemorate a state visit. He handed me a navy velvet box with a card from Jihan Sadat. In it was a beautiful hand mirror. The back was silver repoussé in a lovely floral design, and the handle was a little silver peacock, like the knob of a lid. I knew I would treasure this forever.

It was ten-thirty when the Prime Minister came back. All the members of Mr. Begin's official party were going to dine together. Mr. Begin was his courteous self in spite of a day's hard work. He turned to me, said "Madame," and offered his arm to escort me into the dining room. He went at such a brisk pace that I thought for a moment I was being asked to dance a gavotte or a minuet. It pleased him to know that I was enjoying the experience and had been to my old home. At midnight, he said he felt rather tired, and went to his room. We all dispersed. There were twenty-nine of us, and we were accommodated in twenty-four rooms in La Résidence and an adjoining guesthouse, with baths in which big, old-fashioned tubs stood on squat curved legs. The next morning, we all filed through the front doors of the guesthouses thanking the staff, which had exerted itself with great efficiency and speed within the short time between dinner and the distribution of rooms, coöperating with our security men in putting the name of each one of us on the appropriate door.

Our car procession was now moving in order of protocol toward our illustrious host for informal talks and farewells. When my turn came, President Sadat said of my husband, Abba Eban, "Tell him that from this minute he is invited to Egypt. You should both come to Upper Egypt." I told the President that Abba and I had been to Upper Egypt on our honeymoon. He said, "Well, it is time for a second one." I answered that if it did come about, it would be a honeymoon politically and personally. He laughed. He wrote a dedication in Arabic on a memo pad from the conference table: one of the green leather pads with the eagle crest. I was photographed with him for posterity.

Aziza and I now went to the final



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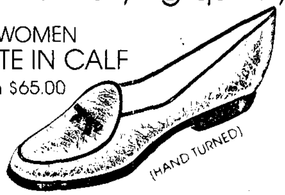

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press conference, in a Suez Canal Authority building. It took place in a huge room with magnificent Oriental draperies with quilted geometrical designs of many colors on a red background. Inside were rows of Oriental rugs, rosaces in their center, and hundreds of chairs in a light wood. Above us billowed long strips of red, blue, and white material. At the side of a table covered with green felt stood the Egyptian flag and—for the first time—the Israeli flag. All the dignitaries of both sides sat in a row on the stage behind the two leaders: Begin, the author of "The Revolt," and Sadat, the author of "Revolt on the Nile," neither of them looking now like the revolutionary of his autobiography. The room was packed with over a thousand journalists, photographers, broadcasters, commentators, editors from abroad. I found it strange to recognize, among all the unfamiliar faces, the very familiar ones of Israeli newsmen whom I had seen at all Israeli dramas—the wars, the Jarring Missions, the Kissinger shuttles. Now they were here on Egyptian soil. They all filed by, doing obeisance to the microphones. Sadat exuded equanimity behind clouds of pipe smoke, and Begin glided over one of the questions like a seal. Some of the questions by representatives of the mass media seemed designed more to provoke war than to accelerate peace. I thought I would make a mental record of what was said to tell my husband and friends back home, but when I landed at Ben-Gurion Airport, fifty minutes later, I found that they had heard everything. Nevertheless, Mr. Begin had to be put through a second, almost identical press conference, and I wondered why—until I concluded that the way of saying it for domestic consumption was now in demand. The last moments of the journey had been devoted to a jaunt over the Pyramids—a hospitable farewell.

As I went home from the airport, I realized that my passport could not be used as a memento of my visit to Ismailia. It had been inspected but not stamped. Since there are no Embassies yet, there is no official record of my ever having arrived in Egypt or having left. —SUZY EBAN

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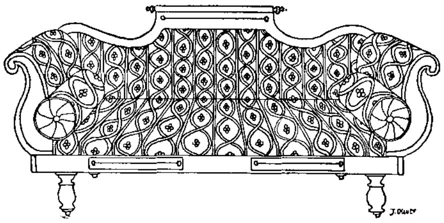
THE SPORTING SCENE

I WAS EXTREMELY LUCKY

On January 23rd, at Pebble Beach, California, Tom Watson won the Bing Crosby National Pro-Am golf tournament and received a purse of forty-five thousand dollars. The day before that, at Boca West, Florida, Bjorn Borg had won the Pepsi Grand Slam of Tennis tournament and received a purse of a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. Borg's final match, against Jimmy Connors, lasted two hours and forty-five minutes; the Pepsi man who handed the victor his large check declared ringingly, on network television, "You're the highest paid hourly worker in the world." If Muhammad Ali was watching, he must have been amused. Borg did not long retain his questionable horal eminence anyway. On January 29th, at Las Vegas, Nevada, it took just a hundred and seven minutes for a man named Moshe (Chico) Felberbaum to win the final round in an international amateur backgammon championship, an event broadcast on closed-circuit television, and with it—thereby thumpingly shedding his amateur status—a first prize of a hundred and eighty thousand four hundred dollars. Chico—sportswriters use nicknames on very short acquaintance—was asked almost immediately after he reaped this monster harvest if he was disappointed at its size, and he said he wasn't. There was good reason for that odd-seeming question: as recently as nine days before the start of the competition, its promoters had been intimating—not much earlier, they had been flatly declaring—that the first prize would come to at least half a million dollars. A modest sum either way, perhaps, for a few minutes' hard work on the part of a champion heavyweight prizefighter, but boxers have to spend a good deal of time and money on training camps, and they also risk getting hurt. Physical violence is only rarely involved in topflight backgammon—though not as rarely as you might think.

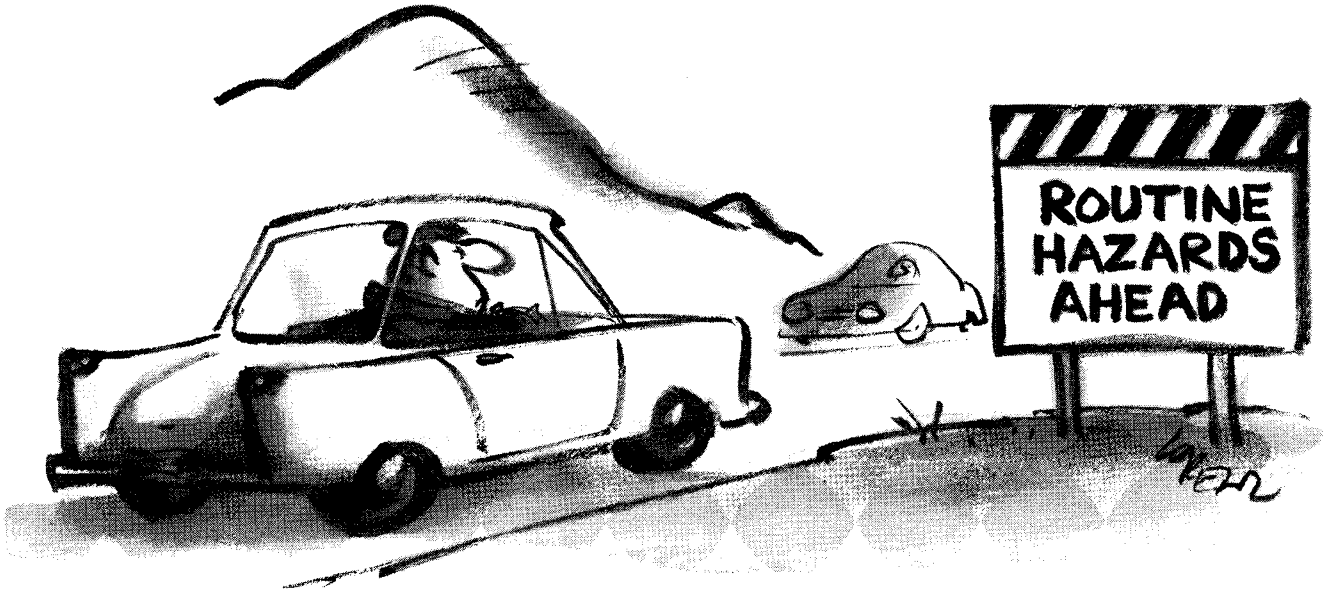
Backgammon! The old dice game we used to play with our fathers when we couldn't find the Parcheesi board. Backgammon has come a long way in recent years. People who profess to know say that there are twenty million backgammon addicts—of varying ages and skills and means—in the United States today, and that in this afflicted country alone annual sales of backgammon sets rose between 1974 and 1976 from two million to five million. Backgammon professionals have a tour circuit of their own now, not unlike pro golfers and tennis players, and they migrate in flocks from Monte Carlo to Saint-Moritz and on to Nassau and Acapulco, vying for hefty gobs of prize money and gambling on the side—among themselves and with obliging pigeons—for enormous stakes. Backgammon has certain undeniable advantages over golf or tennis. For one thing, it can be played anywhere, under any weather conditions, for twenty-four hours at a stretch, and it frequently is. In the more or less friendly lunchtime backgammon games I sometimes join at the Harvard Club in New York, the basic stake is a dollar a point. Howard Reiling, who, at eighty-eight, is the club's oldest functioning backgammon player (and one of its best), can recall when the conventional stake there was a dime a point. Nowadays, when inveterate backgammon players say they are playing for a "dime" they mean ten dollars a point. The giants of the sport, however, who in New York hang around cockpits like the Mayfair and Cavendish Clubs, into which stratospheres I have never ventured, often play, I hear, for a thousand dollars a point, or even more. They also drift in and out of Las Vegas, where hundred-dollar bills are as mundane a medium of exchange as are subway tokens on the I.R.T.

It is hard to keep track of time in Vegas. There are few clocks in the big Strip hotels—the only one I noticed, at the Las Vegas Hilton, wasn't working—and there is little need for them, inasmuch as whatever goes on in that otherworldly community goes on around the clock. (What most people think of as Las Vegas isn't Las Vegas at all; the Hilton, the M-G-M Grand, Caesars Palace, and the Dunes—where I stayed, and where most of the backgammon action took place—are actually situated in a geographical entity debatably named Paradise Township.) Despite the absence of ordinary methods of telling time on what out there is called the Vegascene, the sun still rises and sets, and it is thus more or less possible, provided one occasionally glances through a window, to remember at least what day it is.



January 25th: I am on a Trans World non-stop flight, in economy class, from Kennedy to Vegas, hoping to improve my backgammon prowess by watching some experts perform. I sense that this is going to be an uncommon sort of pilgrimage when, only a minute or two after takeoff, a stewardess gives every passenger who wants one a complimentary deck of playing cards. I hope there will be a tournament for me to observe when we reach our destination. Last summer, a Phoenix, Arizona, former travel agent announced a forthcoming backgammon tournament at Vegas with nearly two million dollars' worth of prize money, but then various agencies of the law, including the Attorney General of the State of New York, began looking into how he was handling the entry fees he had collected, and the whole scheme blew up. The idea, though, was in the wind. Early in November, a second seven-digit-dollar tournament was announced, and this time its sponsors said that the entry fees—five hundred dollars per contestant, which included three nights' lodging in Nevada—would be paid directly into an escrow account at the Marine Midland Bank, in New York, and that nobody could touch a penny of them until the prizes were awarded. There was to be an unconditional limit of three thousand three hundred and twenty-eight participants. No one who had ever won as much as a thousand dollars in a single backgammon tournament, or who made his or her living primarily by playing backgammon, would be eligible. The first prize would be half a million dollars, the second prize two hundred thousand. The last thirty-two survivors would all be in the money. As a come-on, additional prizes were promised for the best showing among women and senior citizens. Concurrent with the main event, there would be exhibition matches between professionals who couldn't play in it, and between members of the New York Yankees and the Los Angeles Dodgers—a kind of reprise of last fall's World Series.

The nominal promoters—not counting the ubiquitous George Plimpton, who had been hired to lend his name to the competition as honorary chairman—were two men whose names



are celebrated in gambling circles: Oswald Jacoby, the septuagenarian grand master at bridge, gin rummy, canasta, and, more recently, backgammon; and Paul Magriel, the thirty-one-year-old wunderkind known as the Human Computer, who gave up playing championship chess and teaching abstruse mathematics (he specialized in the theory of probabilities) to concentrate on backgammon. Magriel is the author of a thick, twenty-dollar tome published two years ago and entitled "Backgammon," and he writes a weekly column about the game for the *Times*. (He has long contended forthrightly that in any single game of backgammon—in contrast to a protracted match—mere luck is a fifty-five-per-cent factor. I can attest to the truth of that: not long ago, in New York, the Human Computer while blindfolded defeated Plimpton in one game and was then defeated unblindfolded in another game by a son of mine over whom I like to think I can usually prevail.) The real promoters were a small syndicate organized by Henry Wattson, a thirty-five-year-old New York-based scion of a California family in the tunnel-construction business, who is a broker in government bonds. Wattson belongs to the Mayfair Club and takes private backgammon lessons from Magriel, who has not entirely forsworn pedagogy. The young master charges five hundred dollars for five two-hour instructional sessions, and more than once after a sour lunch at the Harvard Club I have been tempted to give him a ring. If the promoters had assembled their full quota of three thousand-odd contestants, they would, after expenses, have netted a tidy three hundred thousand or thereabouts for themselves. According to the terms of their October agreement with Marine Midland, which was signed by Wattson and Magriel, if there was not a million dollars in escrow by January 5, 1978—exactly three weeks before the tournament was scheduled to get under way—the whole affair would be called off and everybody would get his money back. By Christmastime, it was clear that the total would fall far short of that cutoff number. On December 31st, a new escrow agreement was proposed by Magriel and by Henry Wattson's older brother Al, the president of the R. A. Wattson Corporation, in California. Now the size of the tournament was scaled down. There was no mention in the second agreement, as there had been in the first, of a million dollars, or of a half-million-dollar first prize. Instead, the arrangement was that of every five hundred dollars that came in, four hundred would go into a prize-money pool, and the promoters would sweeten the pool with an additional hundred thousand of their own. The ultimate winner would receive half of whatever the pool amounted to. With a thousand entries, there would be half a million dollars to spread around among the fortunate thirty-two survivors—fifty per cent of it going to the winner. Twenty-two hundred and fifty entries would re-create the million-dollar situation. With three thousand entries, the winner would receive six hundred and fifty thousand dollars, or even more than had initially been offered. However one looked at it, backgammon was beginning to make golf and tennis seem like peanuts.

ON the plane, I remind myself that I have been warned by a friend of mine named George, who is going to play in the tournament but is booked on a later flight, to beware of hustlers. I am surprised that George is eligible. He once won eight thousand dollars in a smaller-scale Las Vegas tournament. George insists, splitting hairs too fine for me to see, that something like $7,000.05 of that was auction-pool money and only $999.95 was prize-pool money, so he cannot be said to be a thousand-dollar man. He has apparently persuaded the promoters of the reasonableness of his arithmetic. I often play against George, and we break even, all in all, but I have never won anything in any tournament. In terms of proficiency, I am to big-time backgammon roughly what Gerald Ford is to golf. A stranger sitting across the aisle riffles his free deck of cards and says, alluringly, "Would you like to play a little gin rummy?" Who is hustling whom? From the look of him, I could take him for the cost of my entire trip before we cross the Mississippi. But I am feeling kindly. I tell him I do not know the game. Besides, I have spotted Paul Magriel sitting up ahead, and I want to talk to him. Magriel has such a cherubic, innocent face that if I didn't know who he was I might suggest a few hands of gin rummy myself.

I slide into a vacant seat next to Magriel, and he tells me that he has to write his column for tomorrow's *Times* before we land but that he can spare me a few minutes. He says he expects eight hundred players to materialize before the registration rolls are closed. I am startled. A release issued by his own office a fortnight ago said that "at least" two thousand players were expected, and only yesterday a woman at that office informed me that Marine Midland already had money from a thousand players in its custody. Maybe Magriel has been away from his office. In any event, he himself is emphatically ineligible to swell the total of contestants. In October, he won a million drachmas—nearly thirty thousand dollars—in Athens, in a head-to-head confrontation with the legendary Joe Dwek, the London-based scourge of European backgammon (each had the help of a consultant); and just ten days ago he picked up another twenty thousand dollars by taking the World Championship, at Paradise Island, just off Nassau. (It is further indicative of how greatly luck figures in backgammon that in the same tournament the year before Magriel lost in an early round without scoring a point, and that the fellow who skunked him was himself eliminated by a woman whom nobody on the backgammon circuit had ever heard of.) I cannot fathom why Magriel is not riding first class.

"Whatever happens at Vegas, we'll have about four times as many players as ever entered a tournament before," Magriel tells me, "and a prize-money pool ten times the size of any other." He says that arranging for the tournament has kept him so busy that he has had no time to work on any of nine additional backgammon books he is supposed to be writing—on such nuances of the pesky game as "Opening Moves," "Back Game," "Prime vs. Prime," "General Principles of Positional Play," and "The Doubling Cube." Backgammon has been in existence for four or five thousand years, but the doubling cube, which enables players alternately to double the original stake, according to their view of their prospects at any given moment (a player who refuses a proffered double thereupon loses the game in progress), dates back only to the nineteen-twenties, and it has given backgammon an entirely new and sometimes devastating dimension. (The cube goes from 1 to 2 to 4 to 8 and so on giddily up. The highest I personally have seen doubling stop at was 1,024, but that was in a mere half-dollar-a-point game, and, anyway, the chap who stood to lose the most in it wasn't risking much; he was playing aboard his private jet, and his pilots had standing orders that unless they were running out of gas they were never to land it until he was ahead.)

"Many people still think backgammon is a child's game," Magriel goes on, "but in fact there are still millions of things to be understood about it, in terms of theory, that nobody knows. Backgammon is very hard to learn. Everybody thinks it is simple,

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and it seems simple, and the fact that dice are involved in it tends to disguise the fact that it isn't anything of the sort. No one has yet studied the game the way chess and bridge have been studied. There are millions of situations in which nobody knows what the right move is. The trouble is that, my book and other backgammon books notwithstanding, we have too little literature. Imagine how backward we would be in chess today, or in bridge, if nobody had copied down the moves of games. In backgammon, we have no such thing yet, though I am planning to bring out, as still another book, a move-by-move analysis of my Dwek match in Athens. It lasted three days, and I barely beat him, 63–61. As backgammon stands today, in its relative infancy, the great players are great because of inbreeding. We play against one another all the time. I watch other good players and try to figure out why they make certain plays, and that improves my game. But the average player, lacking the appropriate literature, has no access to such a body of knowledge. People say that the top players in the world today have reached perfection. Well, if you were to let me lock myself up in a room for a hundred and fifty years to study the theory of backgammon and then come back and play the me of today, the future me would slaughter me."

AT the Dunes, upon checking in, I find that it is nearly impossible to get to one's room without going through the casino. I am fortunate—I can ignore the silver-dollar slot machines, because I don't have any silver dollars on me. After unpacking, I make my way to a second-floor cluster of chambers where the tournament will start tomorrow. A fellow in the pressroom tells me, with a long face, that I was on one of the last planes to get out of New York on schedule. The East and the Midwest have been smitten by awful storms, and there are backgammon players wringing their idle hands from Maine to Minnesota. George Plimpton is snowed in at Flint, Michigan, and has phoned that he is going to try to get out of there by bus. Plimpton on a bus! There will be a book in that, you can bet your bottom silver dollar. In a second-floor corridor, kibitzer tickets are going on sale—ten dollars to watch any one day's play, twenty-five for the whole tournament. An outfit called Aries of Beverly Hills is providing nine hundred new boards for the contestants to play on; they re-

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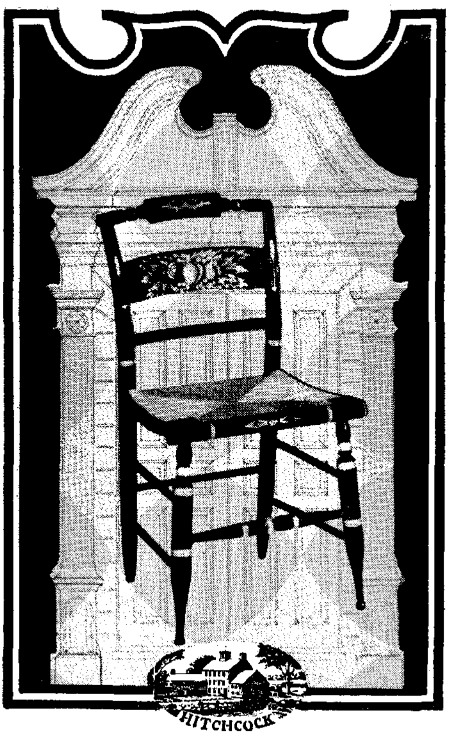

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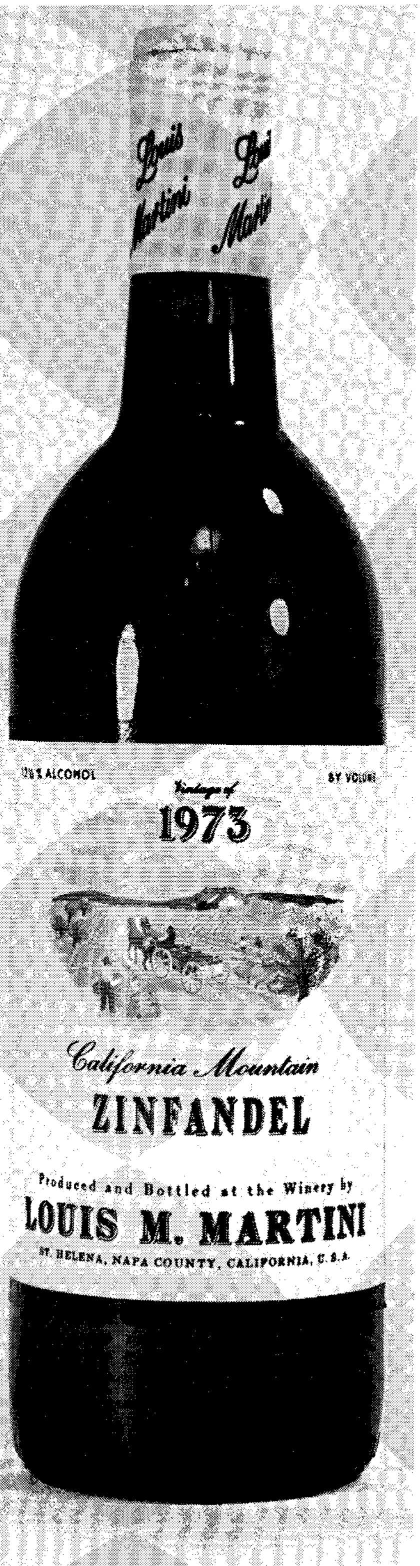

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tail at fifty dollars each but, when it's all over, will be available for purchase, slightly used, at thirty-five. I brief myself on some of the rules that will govern the play: the official tournament language will be English, and nobody may talk in any other; kibitzers may not open their mouths at all, nor may they use hand signals to communicate with players. I hear that Oswald Jacoby, in a last-minute effort to attract some local talent to the fray, is playing backgammon right now on television, and that the nearest set is downstairs in the casino. I rush to the scene. The TV set is alongside a poker table, and just as I arrive one of the poker players gets up and snaps it off in mid-Jacoby. "I have better things to do than watch somebody play checkers," says the poker player, returning to his childish pursuit. Back upstairs, I meet Henry Wattson, the promoter, who is a huge, bearded man. He says that he and his co-sponsors need fifteen hundred entrants to break even, but that, because of the weather and everything, he now anticipates only a thousand. He says there would have been more had not fifty people who tried to enter been disqualified. Wattson says that he himself, as a non-thousand-dollar-winner, would qualify, but that it would probably be unsuitable for him to compete. He says that there is nothing, though, to prevent him from playing *me*, sociably. He invites me to his lair. He will not play for less than a "nickel"—five dollars—a point. I shrug and accept his invitation. We play most of the night, oblivious of countrywide rain, hail, snow, sleet, and other irrelevant distractions. I graciously permit him to pay off in casino chips.

JANUARY 26TH: This morning's Las Vegas *Sun*, which is devoted largely to stories about one of Howard Hughes's wills and about possible effects of radiation on eighty thousand people who were present during nuclear tests in Nevada in the nineteen-fifties, has a brief item in its sports section about our impending extravaganza which says, "At least 2,500 players are expected to compete." While I am puzzling over the source of that figure, my friend George phones from New York. He is inundated at the airport, and will arrive as soon as he dries out. After breakfast, I proceed to a salon where players who have managed to get to Vegas are converging to register. I hear German voices, and Israeli voices, and cascades of Spanish. Flights from Mexico are coming in nicely. Somebody says that if all who are expected to get here arrive, the countries represented in the starting lineup will also include Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, England, France, and Japan. "This is bigger than the Super Bowl and the World Series combined," I hear one man say, in unaccented English. Somebody else says that the Yankees and the Dodgers will not put in an appearance after all ("Too bad," a publicity man comments. "It was to have been their last big fling before spring training") but that Lucille Ball has duly arrived and will play. The less celebrated participants are milling around discussing crucial moments of bygone games ("And would you believe, a double-four, a thirty-five-to-one shot and the only one that could hit me") and, if they haven't previously sent their money in, trying to find somebody who can accept their entry fees. Only a banker who has been dispatched to Vegas by the Marine Midland can do that, it appears, and nobody knows where he is. Paul Magriel is literally running around looking for him. Like most other people in Vegas, Magriel is casually dressed; and—sensibly, in his circumstances—he has on track shoes. Toward noon, a young man arrives who is easily identifiable as the banker: dark suit, with vest; shirt and tie; black shoes; short hair; horn-rimmed glasses; briefcase. He sets up a local branch of the Marine Midland, his back to a mountain of cardboard cartons containing glassware, in a small storage room off a bar. Oswald Jacoby also shows up, and is greeted with reverence befitting his elder-statesman stature; it is as if Bernard Baruch were visiting the White House. Jacoby is wearing bright-red pants and a Harry Trumanish sports shirt. (The word is out that Barclay Cooke, another of backgammon's doyens, is stuck in New York.) Jacoby seizes an empty chair, and a local reporter scurries over to pry a few quotable words out of him. Jacoby reflects for a bit, and then says, "I never stand when I can sit, and I never sit when I can lie down." Hyperbole, I infer, inasmuch as he stays in his chair. One prospective player waiting for an audience with Mr. Marine Midland asks a companion to guess the average age of the sixty or so bodies milling about the premises. The answer comes back with a computerlike immediacy that Magriel might admire: "Thirty-eight." I wander down to the casino in the hope of cashing in Henry

Wattson's chips, which turn out to be redeemable at par for real money. At a nearby bar, I pause for some fresh grapefruit juice, which is delicious here, and which may be the reason that so many people seem to gravitate toward Las Vegas.

By mid-afternoon, tournament play is at last under way, though latecomers are still being allowed to register, and will be tomorrow, too. Concurrent action, I hear, has started up over at the Hilton. There are no favorites, odds-on or otherwise. Few people know who anybody else is, though Magriel did tell me in flight that he suspected that the eventual winner might be a bridge player of championship calibre. "I would predict that he will be somebody who excels at some other table sport," Magriel said. "He will have to have a berserk desire to win, and be used to excruciating tournament pressure." At the Dunes, the competition is taking place in a vast hall called the Crown Jewel Room, and two men, one with a cowboy twang, who are waiting for the signal for them to begin are indulging in a practice game. I watch them and am appalled. One seemingly doesn't know how a game is supposed to start, and the other doesn't know in which direction his pieces are supposed to move. Can this be a double hustle, or are they amateurs of egregious amateurishness? Later, when they get down to serious business, the cowboy throws a 5–4 but wrongly moves a 5–3, and his opponent doesn't notice the gaffe. As a kibitzer, I am forbidden to talk; I manage to suppress a gasp. I wish I were playing against both of them in the tournament.

Toward dusk, I bump into Henry Wattson. "The weather is killing us," he says. I stroll downstairs for a Perrier-and-lime, and, near the bar, espy the Marine Midland banker. "I've never seen anything like this," he says. "I had two hours' sleep last night, trying to get the accounts in order." I ask him when, if ever, he was in Vegas before. "My parents brought me here when I was fourteen," he says, "but this time I haven't even had a chance to put a penny in a slot machine." Word of inflation has evidently not yet reached his bank.

I betake myself to the Hilton, to observe an East-West exhibition match that has been scheduled there. Such bona-fide gods of the backgammon pantheon as Billy Eisenberg, Chuck Papazian, Stanley Tomchin, and Roger Low are supposed to be on view, but the only one I see—standing in a hallway—is Low, a twenty-year-old school

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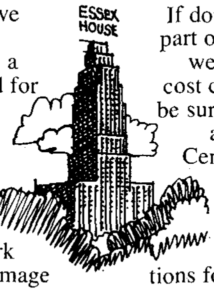

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dropout from New York whose father despaired of him until Roger began earning more money at backgammon than Low *père* ever had at anything. Low *fils* and Magriel occasionally amuse themselves on airplanes, while they are travelling to this or that tournament, by playing backgammon blindfolded. Well, not exactly blindfolded: they use an imaginary board and instead of throwing dice they throw out fingers at one another, and keep everything in their astonishing heads. Roger Low, wearing a broad sash with "Director" printed on it, says that the East-West matches aren't taking place right now but will resume tomorrow. This seems an odd thing to say, considering that, as it turns out, they haven't yet begun. Perhaps he should have stayed in school a trifle longer. He directs my voyeuristic attention to a table where two men are playing for two hundred dollars a point. I watch one of them count a wad of hundred-dollar bills he is clutching in his hand. By my confirming audit, he has twenty-seven of them. His opponent, after a spell of bad dice, runs out of the hundreds *he* has been holding, reaches into a pocket, extracts a fresh supply, and plunges on. Neither says a word. Bored by their lack of carefree chatter, I return, at around midnight, to the Dunes, where I encounter Barclay Cooke, who has finally made it in from New York. "I'm supposed to be on the rules committee," Cooke tells me, "but there doesn't seem to be any ruling to do." His chance will come. I run into Henry Wattson, who suggests a return match. Poor sucker! He will never recoup his large entrepreneurial losses from me. Toward dawn, he graciously permits me to pay him off in travellers' checks, of which I heretofore thought I had brought along an adequate supply.

JANUARY 27TH: At 7 A.M. Las Vegas time, when I have barely fallen asleep, I am awakened by a call from my wife. It is 10 A.M. in New York. How does she know I am here? I thought she thought I was in Tucson, Arizona, visiting a grandson. She says George told her. Blabbermouth George clearly has a lot to learn about male bonding. Now that she knows where I am, she says she is glad she caught me before I went off to work. She wonders how the weather is in Vegas and whether I have had a chance to stroll around town. I tell her, truthfully, that I haven't seen much of the weather and that I don't know which direction town is in. I decide I might as well get up. I can sleep on the plane going home. In the pressroom, I see a late issue of a Mexico City magazine, *El Mundo del Backgammon*. The headline over its lead article is "*El Millon de Dolares ¡Resucitado! ¿O Solo Una Ilusion?*" Somebody hands me a clipping from the *Armenian Post*, a New York City weekly—this tournament is getting a big play all over—which relates how Paul Magriel not long ago conducted a backgammon demonstration as a benefit for the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It is this sort of thing that backgammon players think gives us class; you never hear of poker or gin-rummy players taking time off from their wretched pastimes to accomplish anything cultural like that.

Play is continuing in the Crown Jewel Room. A woman is complaining to one official that the hovering over her shoulder of two other officials cost her her first-round match, because they made her nervous. She has fingernails an inch and a half long, and I would hate to be in her vicinity when she got really agitated. The play is momentarily interrupted by a bewildering announcement over a public-address system: "People who have been forfeited have not been forfeited." Barclay Cooke is conferring solemnly with a bevy of other officials, who are all carmine sashed save him; he is wearing a bright-green sweater, and to drape a red sash over that would be, for a Racquet and Tennis Club man of his distinction, in unspeakably poor taste. Also, too Christmassy for January. One player has a bright-red fez on his head. He doesn't look Egyptian, or even Armenian; perhaps he is a Shriner. He has put a hand-lettered sign next to his board: "NO SMOKING KIBITZERS PLEASE!" That would have raised eyebrows at many another tournament on the pro circuit, because Philip Morris has been a no less dogged patron of championship backgammon—this Las Vegas tournament notably excepted—than of women's championship tennis. The fez man, staring reproachfully at an official with a cigar in his mouth, says, to no one in particular, "Other people deny it, but I am the best player in the world." A moment later, he loses his match, and resignedly walks over to one corner of the Crown Jewel Room to enroll—for an extra hundred dollars—in a Second Chance flight. It has been decreed that of the final thirty-two players, twenty-six will come from the first flight and the remaining six from Second Chance. I hear angry words, and approach a table where an early-round match is in progress. One player has risen to his feet, saying to his opponent, “When you get through smoking, I'll be back.” The tobaccophile glares at him and puffs insouciantly away. An official arrives to clear the air. Nobody mentions that the official is smoking himself. “Try to be a gentleman,” the official says to the nonsmoker. There is an impasse: A says he will not continue play unless B stops smoking; B says he cannot play unless he smokes. Golf was never like this. Ultimately, the official ordains a compromise: the smoker may not keep his ashtray alongside the playing surface but must put it on a chair, and he is not to exhale in a forward direction. How an official in a Philip Morris tournament might have handled this I have no idea. The smoker triumphs, which is only just, inasmuch as the abstainer cheated at one point. He threw a double 5, which required him to play four 5s, but he had only three 5s that he could move with impunity. However he handled the fourth, he would have to expose himself to a damaging hit from his opponent. So after fiddling around with his pieces for a while he played three 5s and a 6, and then quickly picked up his dice. His enemy didn't notice this skulduggery. I did, but my lips, of course, have to be sealed. I am beginning to learn a good deal about self-control.

The winner and the loser do not shake hands. Dismayed by this tawdry exhibition of human frailty, I wander down toward the casino for a Bloody Mary. At the bar, I meet a New Zealander who lives in London and has come here via Haiti to play. He was in retail shoes but is now in wholesale perfumes. While we are swapping curricula vitae, who should loom up but my friend George, who has finally escaped New York! George says that the first-round matches are tricky, because they are short—only seven points apiece—and would I mind serving as a sparring partner and playing him a few seven-pointers before he enters the lists? We work out for a while. George must have jet lag: taking his money is child's play. After he signifies, by hurling his dice past my ducking head at a wall, that he has had enough, we adjourn to the Crown Jewel Room, just in time to witness Lucille Ball coming onstage. She is surrounded by photographers, among them a camera crew from “60 Minutes,” which has deemed

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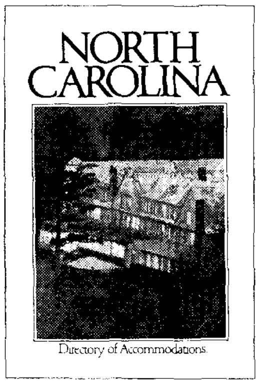

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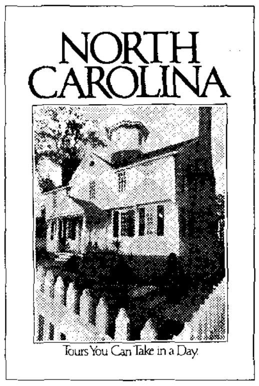

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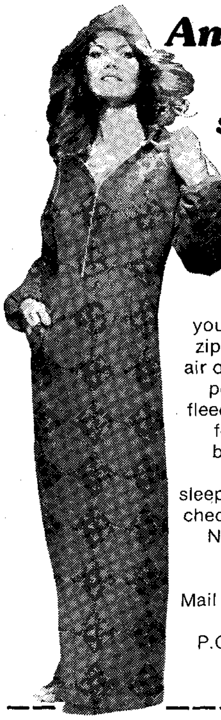

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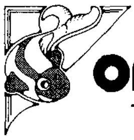

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this happening memorable enough to enshrine in the annals of network television, and whose invasions of privacy I had been carefully avoiding until I came out of my Tucson closet. There is an odd-looking little middle-aged fellow hanging lovingly on to Lucy, whom I identify for an inquisitive bystander as Mickey Rooney. Mickey Rooney double-crosses me by turning out to be Bobby Riggs. Miss Ball's playing area is soon engulfed by spectators, and, being no taller than Rooney-Riggs, I cannot see over their bent heads what is going on, so I stop to chat with one contestant, also from New York, who says he plays both at the Mayfair and at the Yale Club. I'd had no idea that Yale men play backgammon. I return to the casino for a straight vodka. The Marine Midland emissary is hunched wearily over the bar, his tie loose. He says nobody will know until tomorrow, when a banker more senior than he arrives from the East with all the escrow records, how many players there actually are in this benighted tournament. I get back to the Crown Jewel Room in time to see my friend George toss away his first-round match. Before my unbelieving eyes, he stupidly misplays a critical 2–1 roll, and then he neglects to double three times in a row when he is in so advantageous a position that his opponent, if he has any sense, would have to concede that particular game. George is of Greek extraction, and, after he rises and congratulates his deposer, a kibitzer says something to him in a foreign tongue. George nods. I ask him what the other fellow was saying, and in what language. "He said, '*Θά ἔπρεπε νά διπλασιάσης*,' " George says. I request a translation. "That's Greek to me, for 'You should have doubled,' " George tells me. He proceeds to enlist in the Second Chance ranks, and he invites me to play him once more. Lucille Ball is now engaged in some lively calisthenics alongside her playing table. (She eventually reaches the third round, but there falls to a woman wearing less lipstick.) It is nearly midnight, however, and "60 Minutes" has carted off its gear for the evening and so misses this exclusive footage. George and I play *à deux* for several lively hours. A costly mistake on his part.

JANUARY 28TH: This morning's *Sun* has a headline reading "LV BACKGAMMON CONTEST SURROUNDED BY MYSTERY." The *Sun* is wondering, not illogically, why nobody can tell how many people are playing in it. At

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breakfast, I run into George Plimpton. He got here at midnight, he says—too late to play in the tournament. He looks so forlorn that I offer to play him myself. The first-prize winner, it has been announced, will receive not merely cash but also a leg on a trophy called the Plimpton Cup. George P. confesses that he has never laid eyes on it and did not foot the bill for it, so I suppose the trophy cannot be considered exactly analogous to the Davis Cup.

In the playing area, Henry Wattson is standing on a chair calling the roll of Second Chance survivors. George the Greek is not among them. His last tournament ship seems to have sunk at some hideous early-morning hour. Las Vegas is a dangerous place to visit in more ways than one—at four-thirty this morning, I saw a man being carried off to a hospital after slipping, literally, on a banana peel—but it has sturdy furniture: Wattson weighs two hundred and seventy-five pounds, and the chair does not even tremble. There are well over a hundred more or less normal-sized bodies left in contention—out of how many starters we still have not been informed. We do hear that there was almost a fistfight at the Hilton last night—something involving a person who thought he had lost a match, congratulatorily shook his adversary's hand, and was then advised by a loose-lipped kibitzer that he had misread his opponent's dice and hadn't yet lost at all. Barclay Cooke had to be summoned to the Hilton from the Dunes to render a decision, and he ruled against the premature handshaker. A formal protest has since been lodged, which I gather from reliable sources the appropriate officials will in due course see fit to ignore. Almost as soon as play resumes at our hotel, another argument erupts. A woman has played a 4–2, which she insists is what she threw; her opponent, before the woman scooped up her dice, saw it as 5–2. Henry Wattson lumbers over to adjudicate. "I believe that both of you believe you're right," he says, with consummate tact. He instructs them to roll one die each—the higher number to determine what the woman's move is to be. She rolls a 5, her opponent a 4, and she gets to play her 4–2 after all.

Oswald Jacoby is in the room, but he isn't watching anybody. With a large crowd watching him, he is taking on someone from California. "They don't play one another for more than a hundred dollars a point," Wattson tells me. "They'll gladly play other people for more. They'll play *you* for a

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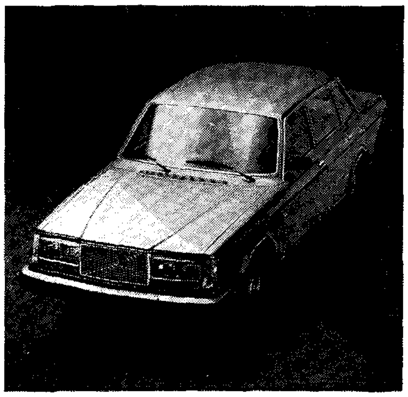
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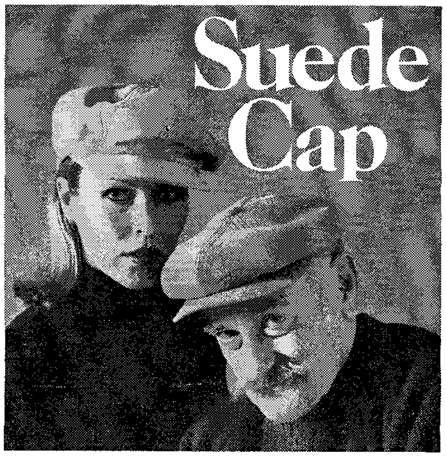

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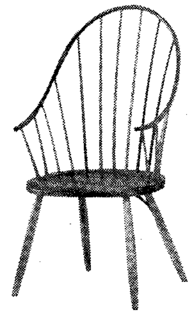


lot more." I ask him, to change the subject, how many players there have been in the tournament, and he asks me to guess. My guess is eight hundred and twelve. He says I am not far off. While waiting for the ranks to be further thinned, I engage in a low-key, three-dollar-a-point contest with another Californian, a young woman who is covering the tournament for the magazine *Gammon*. (The press is here in full force—*Stern*, *Visual Images*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Gambling Times*.) "I'm a second-year law student at Whittier," she tells me, "but since I took up backgammon, eleven months ago, I've been sitting in the back of the classroom studying Magriel's book during lectures." She has not been frittering her time away in law school; she relieves me of three dollars.

The rumor circulates that the number of contestants will finally be put at six hundred and thirty-eight. In any event, we are down to thirty-two of them, and by the end of this day—more accurately, by dawn tomorrow—all but four semifinalists will have vanished from contention. The thirty-two assured money-winners, whatever it may mean, are all male—eleven from California, four from New York, three each from Texas and Illinois, two each from Canada, England, Mexico, and New Jersey, and one each from Florida, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. The oldest is sixty-nine and the youngest twenty-one; their average age (shades of what the fellow in the registration room calculated two days ago!) is thirty-eight. Their surnames have a tangy international flavor: Aryeh, Jalil, Kaloudis, Malik, Manukian, Tcheurekdjian. I have never heard of any of them before.

At 6 P.M., paired by lot, they get under way. I ask Barclay Cooke, who, in view of the increasing seriousness of the moment, has switched to a dark suit (Magriel has stopped running, but he is still in track shoes), whether he is sorry he cannot take part in any of this. "Not at all," he says. "I'm glad to have the pressure off for a while." And indeed the pressure seems to be on: the players do not smile or chat; they take longer between moves than they did in earlier rounds; air-conditioning notwithstanding, there is sweat on more than one furrowed brow. At midnight, I take another spectator break. Henry Wattson invites me to play with him a little. I decline. I would as soon wrestle a bear. Instead, I join George Plimpton and George the Greek and a stray Pakistani in a less pressure-packed game. The man whose name adorns the Plimpton Cup does not consider himself as adept at backgammon as at football, baseball, ice hockey, and other comparatively sedentary sports; he will not play for over two dollars a point. The other George, trying to mount a comeback, insists that the rest of us play for twenty. I have never climbed that high before without oxygen. George P. quits early, an eighteen-dollar loser. He will probably retrieve the loss from a book about how we trounced him. By the time the other George gives up, he has run out of cash. I hope his checks, of which I seem to have a fistful, do not bounce.

At 6 A.M., the semifinalists are revealed: Ron Rubin, a broker and bridge champion from New Jersey, and Simon Naim, a salesman from Chicago, in one bracket; and in the other Dennis Stone, a screenwriter from Van Nuys, California, and Chico Felberbaum, a businessman from Edmonton, Alberta. I fall asleep dreaming of their pots of gold.

JANUARY 29TH: Play in the semifinals is slated to start at 9 A.M. Before then, at breakfast, I meet up with Magriel. He says groggily that the bankers have finally authorized the release of some figures: total contestants, 652; first prize, $180,400; second prize, $72,160; third prize, $18,040; fourth prize, $9,020; lowest prize, $902. "I'm a little disappointed," Magriel says. "But you have to keep everything in perspective. We did end up with the biggest tournament ever, and next year we'll do better, because we've established a certain credibility." Magriel eats cinnamon toast for breakfast.

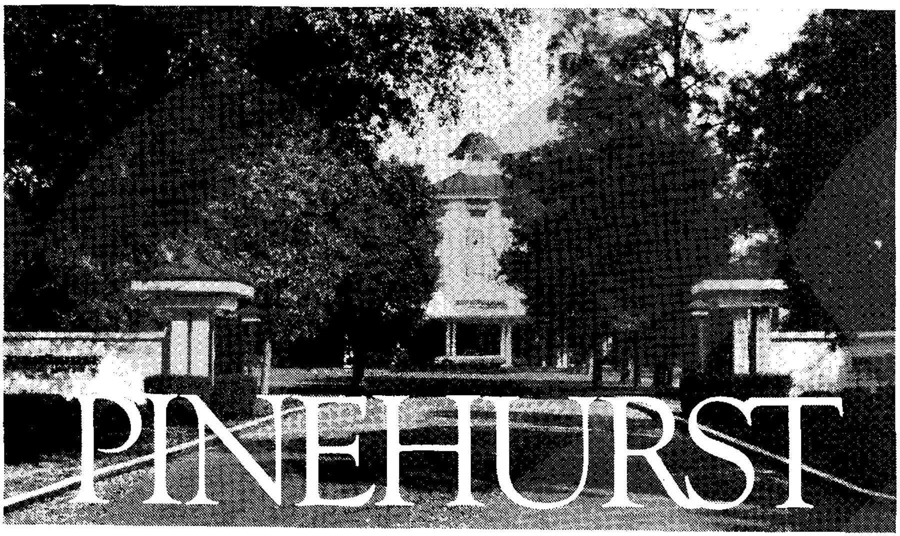
I ask him if the competition has been more disputatious than in run-of-the-mill tournaments.

"The more you play for, the more intense the arguments get," he says. "After all, these guys are playing for nearly two hundred thousand dollars, which could radically change their lives."

The semis begin. It is touch and go at both boards. Finally, Rubin edges Naim, and Felberbaum squeaks past Stone. Rubin and Felberbaum have each had to win ten consecutive matches to get this far. The two finalists, as if at a title-prizefight weighing-in ceremony, repair together to one side of the Crown Jewel Room and, hemmed in by their seconds, confer in muted tones. Word soon spreads that they are trying—to no avail, it turns out—to agree to split their money, sixty per cent of their total take to the winner, forty per cent to the loser. (Splitting the money is not uncommon in such circumstances.) Bobby Riggs saunters by, enticingly waving a tennis racquet. Who could think of tennis, whatever odds Riggs might offer, at a time like this? Anyway, is it daylight or dark, clear or raining? I adjourn to the casino bar for a double Scotch. The younger Marine Midlander is there, besweatered and tieless; a couple more days of this and he'll look as scruffy as the rest of us.

The final is held in a smallish chamber from which most onlookers are barred, except for Barclay Cooke, the designated referee for the epic encounter, and a pit boss from the casino, whose mission is to keep a sharp eye on the dice. The rest of the cast—some four hundred strong—assemble in an adjoining room where we are to follow the tense proceedings on a large television screen, with Magriel furnishing a running commentary. This match will be a fifteen-pointer. There is a mild flap at the outset, about the direction in which the players should move their pieces. (Either way is perfectly acceptable.) "When you're playing for this amount of money, that can make a difference," Magriel explains. "Chico likes his home board to his left." Chico has his way. And then, as they swing into action, Chico wins further: in what seems no time at all, though it is really about an hour, he has attained a huge lead, of 10–1. But in backgammon there are no insurmountable hurdles. Ron comes clawing back, and at 14–4, one point from defeat, he needs a 7 to stay alive. He gets it, with a boldly thrown 6–1. That, though, is the last good breath he draws, and a few minutes later Chico Felberbaum joins Tom Watson and Bjorn Borg on the select roster of big-money champions.

Soon afterward, inevitably, the newly crowned champ holds a press conference. We learn that he is thirty-four, is from Israel, is a Sabra, is the father of two, is married to a photographer. (His wife is here with him, but she is too dazed by their good fortune to remove her camera from its case.) He migrated to Canada nine years ago, and is in "real-estate development" at Edmonton; he prefers not to divulge the name of his company, though it is his own. He has been playing backgammon for about fourteen years, on and off. More off than on: incredibly, he hadn't played seriously for six months



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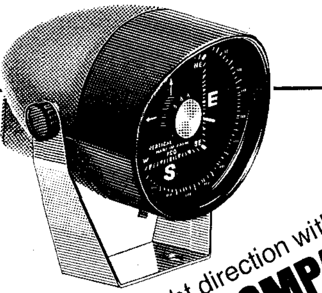

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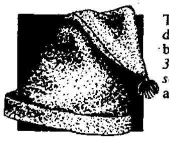

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prior to this tournament. There isn't anybody in Edmonton, he says wistfully, to play *with*.

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"The prize."

What backgammon books has he found most helpful?

"I've never read a backgammon book."

How does he keep his game sharp, if he doesn't play much?

"I don't think it's sharp."

To what does he attribute his success?

"I was extremely lucky, and my opponent had the worst dice."

Has he ever played against any of the pros, and, now that he is one of them, will he be joining them on the circuit?

"I haven't got a chance against them. I think I played against people here who are better players than I am, which shows that backgammon is seventy-five per cent luck."

SOON we all go home. It has been a stimulating experience, everything considered, though following Tom Watson around a golf course might have been healthier. On the Vegascene, things are settling back to normal. The Dunes is preparing for the annual Hadassah dinner dance tonight, Billy Graham is due at Caesars Palace tomorrow, and soon after that, over at the Hilton, Ali will be toying with young Spinks. My friend George gratefully accepts a ride in my cab to the airport, but he is flying to Detroit, not New York. He says he has a deal he hopes to make there with some automobile people. Earlier, he had mentioned that he owned a Rolls-Royce. A good enough deal and he will be close to even. Paul Magriel, for his part, is planning to pack up his track shoes and take off for Riyadh, where he has been summoned to give private lessons for a whole month, at what hourly rate of pay I dare not contemplate, to a brother of the King of Saudi Arabia.

—E. J. KAHN, JR.

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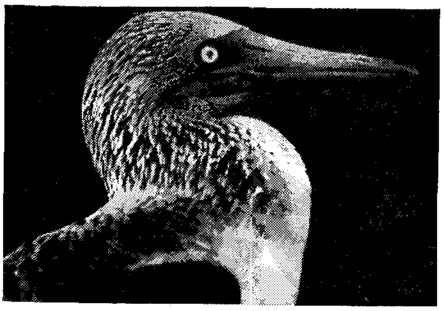

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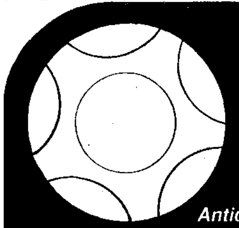

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THE RACE TRACK

Big Money

It was just a question of time. Seattle Slew, the 1977 Horse of the Year, was syndicated for $12,000,000, a world's-record book value, on February 17th. Mickey Taylor, the young Washington State lumberman who gave $17,500 for the dark-bay colt by Bold Reasoning out of My Charmer at the 1975 Kentucky Fasig-Tipton yearling sales, announced that a group of horsemen headed by Brownell Combs, of Spendthrift Farm, and including Franklin Groves, a Minneapolis industrialist, and George Layman, Jr., of Yakima, Washington, had bought a half interest in the colt for $6,000,000. Taylor and his group have retained the other half interest. Slew's worth now surpasses that of E. P. Taylor's The Minstrel, winner of the Irish and English Derbies, who was syndicated for $9,000,000 last fall. The new record holder will stand at Spendthrift Farm, of which Brownell Combs is manager, but he will not be retired to stud immediately. He is now in training for the $100,000 Metropolitan Handicap (the Memorial Day attraction at Belmont Park), and after that he may run in the Suburban and Brooklyn Handicaps.

Dr. Archie Donaldson's Silver Series swept to a three-length victory in the $148,750 Widener Handicap at Hialeah last Saturday before a crowd of 22,000, the largest of the season. Adriatico, who had a good finish at the end of the mile and a quarter, saved the place by a length and a half from Villador. Sawbones was fourth. The time was 2:02⅕. Silver Series stumbled slightly coming out of the starting gate, but he recovered quickly, and Cordero, who always had him in a good position, made his move in the last quarter to win easily. Curious, the twists of racing luck. Run Dusty Run, who had beaten Silver Series by noses in the $100,000 Hialeah Challenge Cup Invitational and the Seminole Handicap, would have been the favorite for the Widener had he not come out of a workout with a hairline fracture of his left cannon bone. Veterinar-

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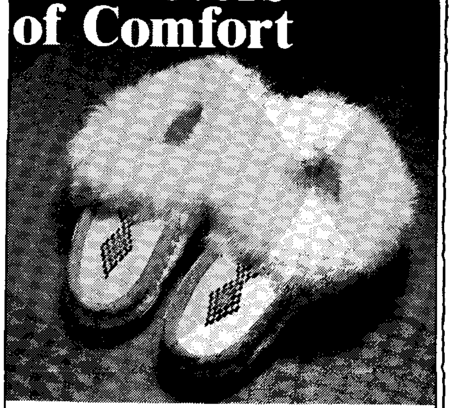

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ians say that if no complications set in he can be saved, but he will never race again. He has been retired. On the other hand, fortune was with Silver Series. In a morning gallop before the race, he unseated his rider, bolted, raced through a gap in the fence and into the stable area, and ran directly back to his barn. Almost anything could have happened to him, but he came out of the escapade without a scratch. How's that for luck?

I HAVE a notion that Quadratic's stable is just as glad that Noble Dancer II cannot be entered in the $100,000 Flamingo Stakes, for three-year-olds, on March 4th. At six, he's too old, of course, but he's still one of the leading performers in Florida this winter. A big British-bred bay by Prince de Galles out of Helen Traubel by Sing-Sing, he was ill last summer and didn't race for seven months, but early this winter Tommy Kelly, who trains him for Haakon Fretheim, a Norwegian shipping magnate, gave him a prep gallop on the grass at Hialeah, and he went so well in it that Kelly put him in an allowance race, which he won, and then in the Bougainvillea Handicap. Carrying top weight in the Bougainvillea, he gave the Greentree Stable's Family Doctor eleven pounds and beat him by a length and a half. On February 18th, he won the Hialeah Turf Cup, too. It will be interesting to watch what he does from now on. Speaking of the Flamingo, Calumet Farm's Alydar has been training very well for it and may give Quadratic something to worry about.

THEY are still bidding for horses the way they did years ago for tulip bulbs. At the dispersal sale of Harry Mangurian's breeding stock at Ocala, Florida, last week, sixty-one thoroughbreds brought $4,595,000. Franklin Groves, one of the members of the Seattle Slew syndicate, gave $700,000 for Desert Vixen, a two-time Eclipse Award winner, who is in foal to What a Pleasure.

THE best recent news from Kentucky was that Fanfreluche, the noted Canadian mare who was stolen from Claiborne Farm last June while in foal to Secretariat and became the subject of a worldwide search (she was recovered some months later), foaled Secretariat's colt at Claiborne Farm a couple of weeks ago. Mother and child are doing well, they say. A happy ending to an extraordinary situation.

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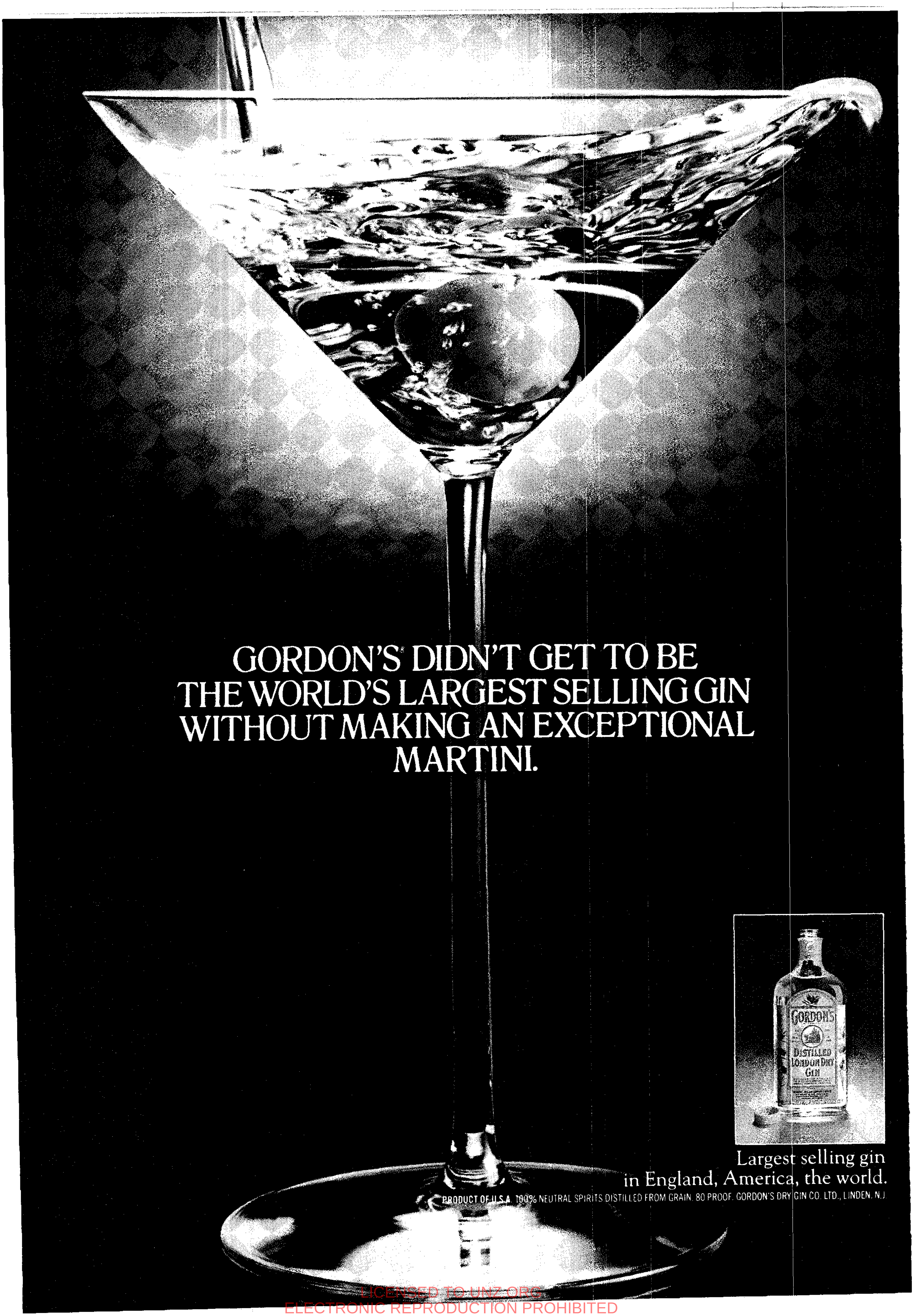
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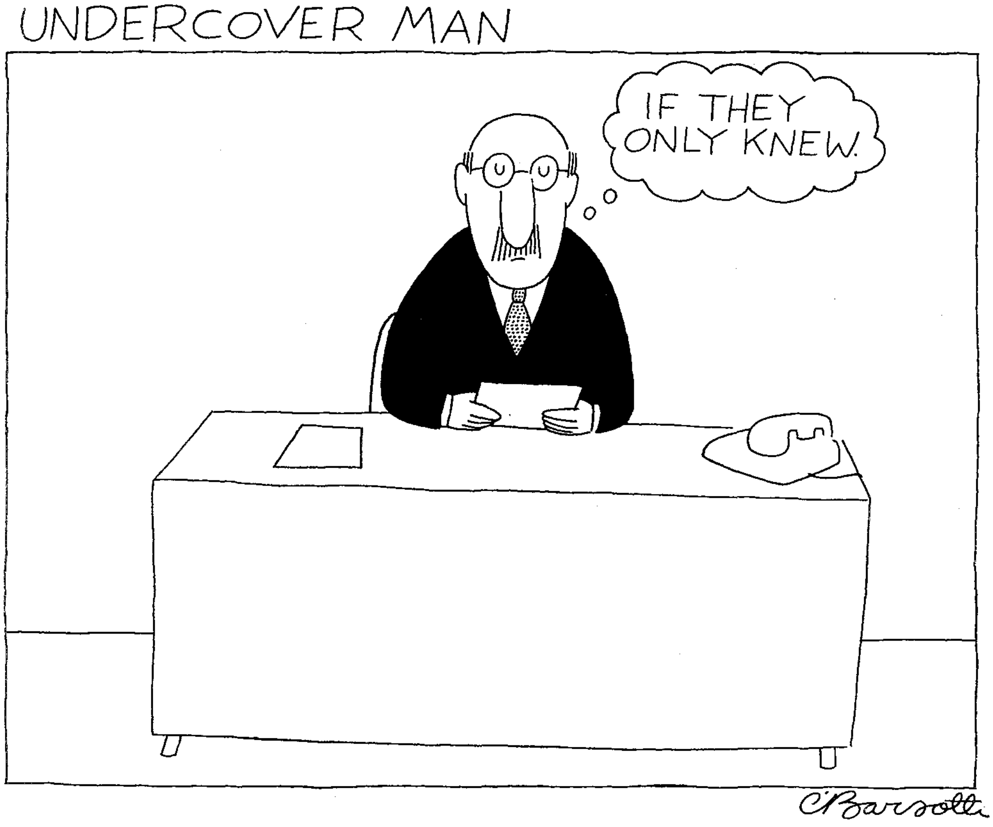
ERICA (Jill Clayburgh), the heroine of Paul Mazursky's "An Unmarried Woman," sleeps in a T-shirt and bikini panties. There are so few movies that deal with recognizable people that this detail alone is enough to pick up one's spirits. Erica works part-time in a SoHo gallery and lives in an East Sixties high rise, with her stockbroker husband (Michael Murphy) and their fourteen-year-old daughter, Patti (Lisa Lucas). She has been married for sixteen snug years when her husband tells her he's fallen in love with a girl he met in Bloomingdale's. Suddenly, she's on her own, like her divorced women friends, contending with loneliness and the comic horrors of the modern dating game. She's resentful, scared, dazed. And her sexual hostilities are so acute that when a man greets her with an ordinary, faintly leering hello she rasps out an obscene put-down. The audience breaks up in laughter at her expletive—which represents the truth of what she feels, and cuts right through to what's on his mind, too.

Jill Clayburgh has a cracked, warbly voice—a modern polluted-city huskiness. And her trembling, near-beautiful prettiness suggests a lot of pressure; her face is a little off-key, quizzical and unsymmetrical, and too thin for her features. (Nature intended there to be cheeks where there are only hollows.) On the stage, she can be dazzling, but the camera isn't in love with her—she doesn't seem lighted from within. When Erica's life falls apart and her reactions go out of control, Clayburgh's floating, not-quite-sure, not-quite-here quality is just right. And she knows how to use it: she isn't afraid to get puffy-eyed from crying, or to let her face go slack. No other film has made such a sensitive, empathic case for a modern woman's need to call her soul her own, and "An Unmarried Woman" is funny and buoyant besides. It's an enormously friendly, soft-edged picture. Yet there's a lot of hot air circulating in it. Mazursky, who wrote the script as well as directed, is a superb shaggy screenwriter and rarely less than deft, but he touches so many women's-liberation bases that you begin to feel virtuous, as if you'd been passing out leaflets for McGovern.

In dealing with social themes, movies are generally about five years behind books, and right now they're also two or three years behind TV. That may explain why Mazursky is a little ashamed to introduce Erica's consciousness-raising group, and passes it off as a club. Erica's clubmates are played by Pat Quinn, the Alice of "Alice's Restaurant," as hardheaded, compromising Sue, in short hair with thick bangs; Kelly Bishop (who was known as Carole Bishop when she appeared in "A Chorus Line") as Elaine, an alcoholic, brunette version of the old, Eve Arden pal; and Linda Miller as the glazed seductress Jeannette. We can't see what brought Erica and these coarse-grained types together; she went to Vassar and they're M-G-M, class of '39. But we know what they're doing in the movie: they illustrate the various humiliations to which aging women are subject, and they spell things out—loss of self-esteem, problems of identity. They're in the movie to raise *our* consciousness.

"An Unmarried Woman" may give Mazursky the popular success that his films "Blume in Love," "Harry & Tonto," and "Next Stop, Greenwich Village" should have given him; this is the only one to deal in marketable compassion. What may be disappointing to those who love his earlier work is that in crucial parts of this picture he seems to have suppressed his sense of satire. The analytic sessions in his "Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice" and "Blume in Love" were small masterpieces of comic timing: every pause made its point. Here Erica's two sessions with her therapist, Tanya (played by Dr. Penelope Russianoff), dribble on tentatively, in what feels like real time; they're lifelike in the worst sense. Potentially, the analyst-analysand relationship is just as funny as in his other movies—maybe funnier, since both doctor and patient appear to be unusually slow thinkers. But Mazursky seems so overwhelmed by the seriousness of the subject that he's unwilling to trim and heighten these conversations so that the banality would make us laugh instead of just leaving us to feel, Oh, God, this scene isn't working. He may be afraid of being cruel, yet there is no cruelty in the comedy of his earlier pictures—his heart and his wit are in the same place. In the second session, when the therapist (who dawdles like Stepin Fetchit) finally suggests that Erica "get into the stream of life, get back in there"—i.e., go out with men—it's a deliverance for the audience, because the picture needs to start rolling.

It does. Erica has a one-night stand



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with a wood sculptor, Charlie (Cliff Gorman), at his loft; the clotted hanging fern that she pushes aside when she leaves—it's like a long-haired wig that's growing—might be an emblem of their tussle. The whole movie is full of sexual anxiety; that's why it has such a prickly, contemporary feel. It's very consumer-culture-conscious and New York-conscious. The cinematography, by Arthur Ornitz, which features windows and skyline views, doesn't have anything like the sun-spangled vivacity that Gordon Willis brought to the New York of "Annie Hall" (a film with related states of anxiety). Ornitz is an inexpressive realist; he makes images "real" by sapping the life out of them. (There's no dynamism even when the camera moves.) But his work here is more delicately muted and less grungy than usual—the SoHo streets seem to spark him. The score, by Bill Conti (who did the "Rocky" music), is heavy on the saxophone—a blend of Gershwin and "Last Tango" that is maybe too expressive. It keeps *crashing in, drenching* us in symphony-of-a-city melancholy sex. Even when the sex is fairly cheerful. Erica's next encounter is with Saul Kaplan (Alan Bates), a bearded, bearlike painter who works in acrylics on huge canvases. (His studio and his paintings are those of Paul Jenkins, whose style suggests a more garish, sloppier, and less lyrical Morris Louis.) Bates works on a canvas lovingly: this is one of the rare occasions when a movie actor has simulated a painter so that you enjoy watching. In the first film Bates has made in this country, he gets a chance to be expansive and show his talent for comic mimicry. (He does great double takes using only his gleaming eyes.) Saul is another of Mazursky's men who are born husbands—an older Larry Lapinsky, a rounder Blume. When he comes to dinner at Erica's apartment to meet her daughter, Patti tries to be flip and knowing; she gets snagged in her feelings, recovers, and apologizes. The scene doesn't turn too poignant, because we take in Patti's shifts of emotion through Saul's what-have-I-got-in-to-here responses. He has scale and ebullience; he's so blissfully, demonstratively physical that the movie gives promise of turning into a happy love comedy. But Erica has been becoming more and more high-minded, under Mazursky's awed gaze. He's such a romantic that when he turns feminist he's the most romantic feminist of them all.

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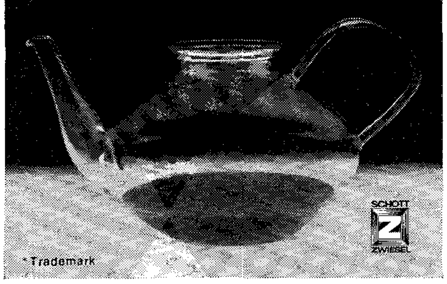

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Erica leaves men groggy with admiration after they've been to bed with her. Her ex-husband, realizing the mistake he's made, asks to be taken back, but she's grown beyond him. (His tight face and anguished eyes show us that he accepts the justice of his punishment.) Erica is in a different class from her divorced clubmates. They can't land a decent, suitable, sexy fella; she casually snares the famous Saul Kaplan. But she's discovering so much about herself and the meaning of independence that she isn't ready for a commitment.

Jill Clayburgh's appeal to the audience is in her addled radiance; she seems so punchy that we're a little worried for her. And so when the movie provides Erica with a robust, worshipful man with good instincts (and he's even got money), and she hesitates and demurs and worries about her development, we lose interest in her. This attractive man with the most honorable, protective intentions wants her (and her daughter) to come to his house in Vermont for the summer, and this woman who has nothing in particular she wants to do and nothing special she's interested in feels she has to stay in New York to continue finding herself. In New York in the summer? She appears to be a goofed-up spoilsport, who doesn't want Saul or herself or her child to have a good time. What is she going to find? That's what viewers may be asking. As a moviemaker, Mazursky is a stand-up guru, a manic psychologist; his gift is that he can be funny without telling jokes. But he seems afraid to kid the rhetoric of the quest for the self. This quest—a new kind of feminine mystique—Mazursky treats tenderly, respectfully.

There are probably a fair number of men who have become feminists out of love for a woman combined, perhaps, with a sense of justice and maybe a dose of guilt, but Paul Mazursky is the only one of them to have made a movie about it. His heroines, such as Nina in "Blume in Love" and Sarah in "Next Stop, Greenwich Village," have been mysteriously, somewhat antagonistically unreachable, and his heroes have made bumbling attempts to understand them. Identifying with the heroes, Mazursky didn't stay away from making them fools. But here, trying to identify with Erica and tell the movie from a woman's point of view, he does shy away from having her look foolish. And because women are still mysterious to him, he takes refuge in the new women's rhetoric. His approach is benign, tentative—en-

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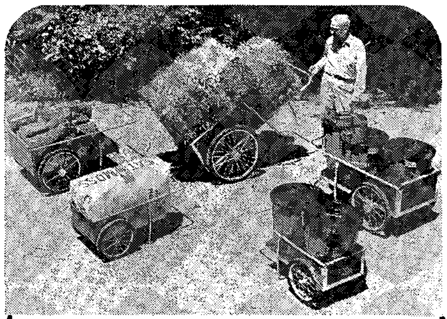

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tangled in the craziness of this war in which you sleep with the enemy.

From the way Mazursky presents Erica, when she indicates to Saul that she isn't ready to live with him—that she needs more time—we can't tell whether she's struggling toward independence or embracing the generalized anxiety and dissatisfaction in the culture and sinking into it. Mazursky's underlying ambivalence may be partly responsible for the lack of inner strength and depth in Jill Clayburgh's performance. Erica has vague yearnings, while Saul, trying to hold on to her, despairing of ever getting through to her, is solid, alive, all there. The parts of the movie don't fit together. This nebulous tormentor Erica is not the same woman who was happily married for sixteen years; she was never happily married. She was never solid and all there. Mazursky turned away from his story about the tragicomic shattered lives of divorcées who can't find the emotional security of a new marriage toward the story of a woman who's looking for something—unformulated—in herself. He began in Dore Scharyland and then stumbled into the Red Desert. His ambiguous ending, which is a way of postponing *his* decision, suggests that he can't get through to his own creation. He doesn't know what's going on in Erica's head.

Despite Mazursky's conscious intentions, Saul has been made such a rich, loamy Father Earth figure that he overpowers the movie, and Erica seems puny and pale by comparison. Everyone is neurotic except Saul; the only way the comic balance could be restored would be if Saul were revealed to be a smothering fraud. Erica seems an idiot for resisting him—the picture leaves her turning in the wind, like a slightly gaga Mother Courage directed by Andrei Serban.

—PAULINE KAEL

•

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[*From the Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee of Conference, House of Representatives Report No. 95-230*]

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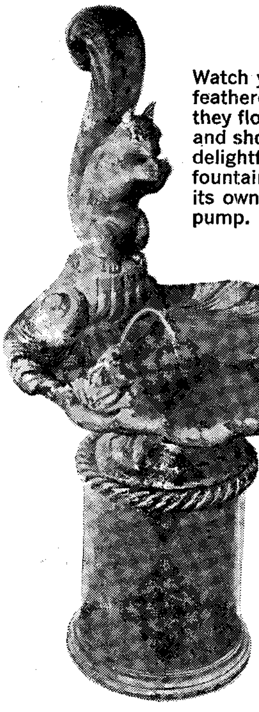

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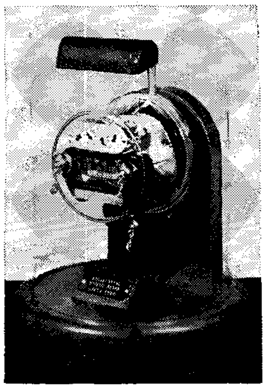

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DANCING

Visions

"DON QUIXOTE" is not many people's idea of a Balanchine ballet, yet to anyone interested in what Balanchine ballets are about it is an indispensable work to have seen. And especially to have seen with Suzanne Farrell, for whom its Dulcinea was created. In the course of six performances that closed the New York City Ballet season, Farrell rose to a level of expression that even she may not have hit before in this role. She did all six performances and only got stronger, and by closing night the whole company was rising with her. A story went around that this was the last performance ever of "Don Quixote." If so, the sick man of the repertory went out with a glorious bang. There was even a new Don, Adam Lüders, who gave the best interpretation of that role since Balanchine himself.

The ballet is a wildly uneven work. Its lows (which include Nicolas Nabokov's score) are very low, but its highs can be stratospheric. The weakest sections are in the first act, where, after a prologue showing the wild-eyed Don dreaming of knight-errantry in his study and then beginning to act out his dreams on the plains of La Mancha, we come to the inevitable village-square set. The strain of the establishing scenes is over, the audience relaxes and needs something to applaud. It is always a difficult moment in an evening-long spectacle, and I can't say that any of Balanchine's revisions over the years have solved the problem of appeasing the audience without losing the ballet's focus. The portion of Act I that has always been just right (besides the Prologue, and even that is once-revised) is the Marcela episode, followed by the puppet show in which the Don sees a tiny reënactment of his own crusade. Curiously, there are precedents for all three of these scenes in the old Petipa-based "Don Quixote" that has figured for so long in Russian repertory. The extent to which Balanchine has repositioned, reworked, and indeed rethought elements of Petipa may become clearer when American Ballet Theatre presents Mikhail Baryshnikov's production of the old ballet this spring. Perhaps the most striking of Balanchine's re-creations, amounting to a whole new invention, is Marcela, one of the many guises of Dulcinea. Marcela is high-caste; from her dress, which is that of a Marie Antoinette shepherdess, we may guess that she is a lady from the Duke's court who affects the "simple" life. When the Don meets her, she's being dragged through the marketplace by the villagers, who accuse her of having driven a poet to suicide. The Don frees her, and she has a solo that is Farrell's first big moment of the evening. In the old Petipa ballet, the hero—who is not Don Quixote but a poor young barber named Basilio—fakes a suicide attempt in order to keep his girlfriend from marrying a rich suitor. This farcical incident comes from Cervantes, and elsewhere in Cervantes Balanchine found the provincial beauty Marcela, for love of whom a young man has died. The lines that apply to the stage character are those in which Marcela explains to the Don that her virginity is her freedom, that she's not responsible for what men may do who love her because she's beautiful but would deprive her of her freedom for the same reason. Marcela's logic and the symbolism of her dress (she flourishes a shepherd's crook as she dances) are enlarged upon in Balanchine's resetting of the Petipa vision scene. In both ballets, the envisioned women are dryads, but Balanchine, a Shakespeare to Petipa's Holinshed, makes sense out of this ancient ballet convention. His text is Marcela's "I was born free, and to live free I chose the solitude of the fields." This season, Esteban Francés' woodland backcloth was missing. The sombre sky that replaced it, together with the prelude recently added to this scene, in which Dulcinea enshrouds the wounded Don in her white veil, seemed to move the atmosphere closer to the Shades scene in "La Bayadère." The fields of Marcela's solo wanderings have become the Elysian Fields, and we know the Don is very close to death.

"Don Quixote" amplifies and recapitulates such important Balanchine themes as the Poet and His Muse, His Quest, His Impotence and Vindication. The ballet does not really derive from Cervantes or Petipa; it derives from "Orpheus" and "Le Baiser de la Fée" and "La Sonnambula," with intimations of "The Prodigal Son" and "Serenade" and "Swan Lake." Anyone who knows these and other Balanchine ballets will readily see why Balanchine wanted to make a "Don Quixote" for twenty years before he actually did so, in 1965. What might not be so obvious is why the ballet took the form it did—a three-act spectacle with a plot that stops every so often for dance divertissements. The answer is that Balanchine, as in other projects of his, was following, and improving upon, Petipa. And the alternative—an integrated dance drama—does not really exist.

The reason, I believe, is that, unlike Romeo or Othello, the Don is a literary figure whom one cannot imagine dancing. In the old "Don Quixote," he is entirely marginal, an excuse to get vision scenes going or to provide some low comedy. Balanchine has made the Don a tragic hero—a sainted fool and, at the last, a martyr. Yet after a few adventures in Act I he changes from a man of action into a philosophical presence, someone through whose eyes we see the events of the ballet. The Don, though a poet, is not a lover. Had it been possible to imagine him passionately in love, almost certainly he would have had to be a dancer. But we know that Dulcinea is not real and the Don's longings aren't sexual. He embodies chivalrous attitudes, and Dulcinea is a part of the breadth and constancy of his vision. From legend we know, too, that the Don is tall and spindly and getting on in years, but this alone doesn't make him an unseemly romantic hero for a ballet d'action. Faust—in any serious attempt at a "Faust" ballet—would have to be a lay figure, too, for though Faust's loves are passionate, they are also lyrical and divine. Visionary heroes are more naturally expressed through mime. And Quixote's idealistic fantasies find their perfect theatrical expression in classical dance.

At first, in what he chooses to idealize, Balanchine may seem less than quixotic: he makes the dreams of beautiful and chaste women more important to the Don than the righting of injustices. But this is so because dreams of beauty are more danceable than dreams of justice. Petipa knew it, too. And it is during his short career as a humanitarian that Balanchine's Don comes closest to the buffoon portrayed by Petipa and Petipa's successors. Balanchine shows the oppressed turning on their savior as soon as they have been freed. This would seem unaccountably bitter did he not also show a grandiloquent Don who expects gratitude for his little services. The bleak tone of the comedy is more than a little Chaplinesque, and so is the ultimate sentiment of the ballet, when, at the end, the Don dies mourned by the little peas-

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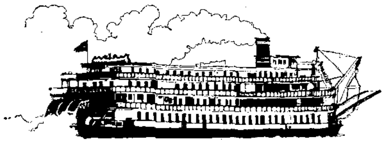

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ant girl whom he had idealized as Dulcinea. It is then that we see him through her eyes, a saint; and the idea redawns that he really does expect gratitude for his sacrifices, and more than gratitude. Is "Don Quixote" Balanchine's "Limelight"? Back in 1965, when Balanchine played the Don in the first performance, the emphasis in the death scene was, as it should be, on the way the Don dies. He awoke from his delusions, recognized his friends (including the little peasant), and died "a wise man," as he does in Cervantes. When Balanchine stepped out of the part, he switched the emphasis in the final moments to the girl (Farrell); it is now she who recognizes Quixote and all he has been trying to do. She places on his breast the rude crucifix of twigs and falls to her knees, overcome not only by the presence of a saint but by personal loss. This has always been a bit much; yet it would and did take great acting to convey what Balanchine conveyed in those last few moments, and the change in emphasis probably came about because he had more confidence in Farrell than in whoever was playing the Don. But there's no question that he always meant to make the Don a saint.

The poet a saint? Balanchine's ballet may strike some people as uncomfortably religiose. To others it is uncomfortable simply because it awakens rational considerations that seem beyond the capacities of ballet to express. It is one of the few Balanchine ballets that can be discussed as intellectual rather than purely poetic events, and that is one way we know it is at least in part a failure. The Marcela story is overallusive, and so is the long religious procession at the end. As the Don lies dying, he has visions of the Church Militant, of the Church Penitent, of his books burning. We force our minds a little and decide that this means he has been judged a heretic by the Inquisition. But forcing our minds is precisely what we don't want to do at the end of a long, complex, image-studded ballet; we want the images to continue inseparable from their meaning. When they don't, ambiguities cloud the scene. The religious procession is just a procession. Every kind of ecclesiastical costume turns up, and finally it's the Church Ambivalent parading through the Don's chambers. Burning books are easy to show on the stage, but "Inquisition" is not a concept that a ballet can express, and *why* the books are burning cannot be made clear.

Farrell's return in 1975 to a role she had largely outgrown pointed up the ballet's deficiencies; it seemed to lie in ruins around her. But though we may well have seen the last of "Don Quixote," as of this season Balanchine hadn't lost interest in it. There was a new jota for the villagers to perform at the opening of the marketplace scene. Hyperinventive, like the folk dances in "Coppélia," it was all the dancing I wanted at this point in the story. (The Don and Sancho have just embarked on their adventures.) But it turned out to be the prelude to the Pas Classique Espagnol that was added to the ballet a few years ago. This extended and rather contrived number for twelve dancers in pimento, black, and white creates the break for applause for which Balanchine had searched so long (and a dancer like Merrill Ashley can whip up a real stir), but to me it is Balanchine conceding his failure to meet the special demands of Act I. When we pick up the Don again, he's already a famous madman. And the Marcela episode, previously the high point of the act, is undercut, because Marcela is no longer the first ballerina the audience sees.

The Pas Classique corresponds to the wedding divertissement that is danced in the Petipa ballet by Kitri and Basilio. Up to its insertion, Balanchine had avoided the idiom of ballet Spanish—I assumed because he thought it a cliché. Of course, there is still that non-cliché suite of exotic dances in the second act—dances so heavy with perfumes of Ethiopia, Morocco, and Bali that an innocent little Courante Sicilienne looks out of place. Unlike the Pas Classique, the court divertissement is a contribution to the ballet's atmosphere. Probably the dancers are the Duke's slaves (and the counterpart to Petipa's gypsies), but their pagan sensuality is no affront to the Christian knight. He suffers instead a ritual hazing at the hands of decadent courtiers, is beaten, mocked, and scourged. It's in this act that the ballet's beauties start to mount up and the drama of Don Quixote truly begins. For the courtiers' sarabande, the Pas de Deux Mauresque, the ghastly masquerade of the hazing, and the spectacle of a pathetic staggering old man braced by the young girl of his dream, Nabokov has provided good, even memorable music, and there is more of it in the pas d'action of the last act—a frenzied solo for Dulcinea, a racing coda. But, music or no music, Balanchine is now in complete command of the action and his invention soars.

The ballet has always been a soloists' display case. More débuts took place in these six performances than in the whole winter season. Foremost among them was Lüders as the Don. Where Balanchine suggested a vigorous grandee, Lüders—like Richard Rapp, who was the first to take the role over from Balanchine—looks mild and frail. But Lüders is different from all the other young men who have played this role. He doesn't have to cover up so much of himself. His small head might be the shrunken skull of an old man. With his pale coloring and deep-set eyes, he suggests a fanatic whose brain has been burned dry by obsession, but he has the strength of that obsession, too. His long legs are stiff with bravado. And he pursues Dulcinea as an ideal, not as a woman. In the dancing roles, new and compelling images were created by Kyra Nichols in the Rigaudon Flamenco, Peter Naumann (in a good makeup) in the Danza de la Caccia, and Nichol Hlinka in the Pas de Deux Mauresque. Miss Nichols made an event of size and power out of the presto variation in Act III but, like everyone else who has danced it since Marnee Morris, missed the amazing full stop in attitude fondue. Stephanie Saland's dancing in the companion variation and in the Ritornel was lovely to see, impossible to feel; Susan Hendl in the same roles was smaller but stronger in contour and attack. Act III is, of course, Farrell's act. It is the young, hungrily and almost heedlessly expansive Farrell who is on view here, and the Farrell of today dances her former self with no loss of rapacity. On opening night, I thought she looked underpowered except in the heavenly lifts guided by Sean Lavery. But by the closing performance she was delivering miracles: performing further out on the periphery of her balance than I had ever seen her—all but falling—and with absolute confidence in that gyroscopic center of hers. Did Balanchine ever really say "Ballet is woman"? He did say, in a *Life* article at about the time of the première of "Don Quixote," "Ballet is one place where art flourishes because of a woman: woman is the goddess, the poetess, the muse. That is why I have a company with beautiful girl dancers. I believe the same is true of life, that everything man does he does for his ideal woman. You live only one life and you believe in something and I believe in a little thing like that."

—ARLENE CROCE

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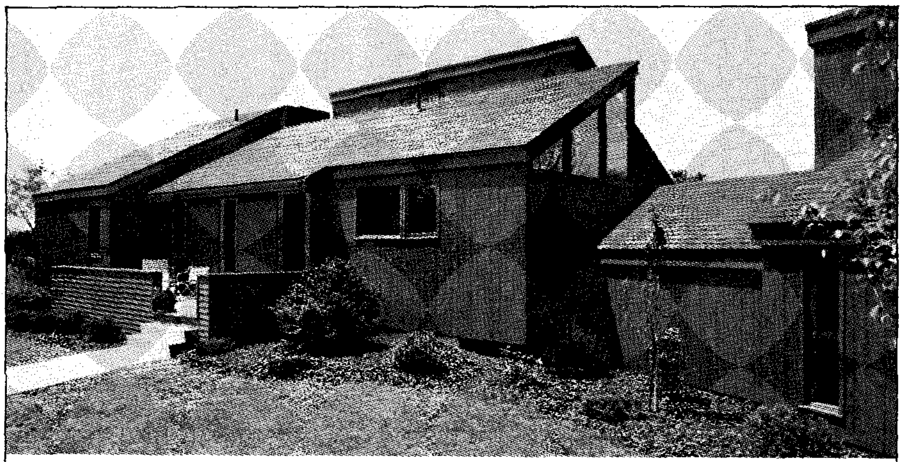

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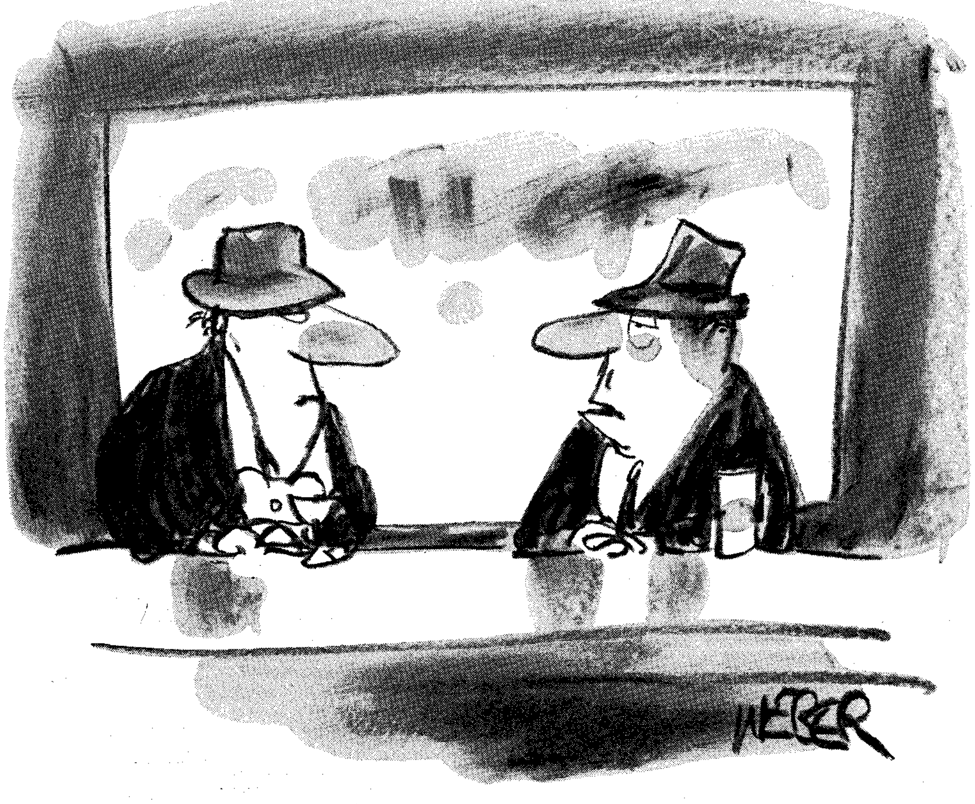
MUSICAL EVENTS

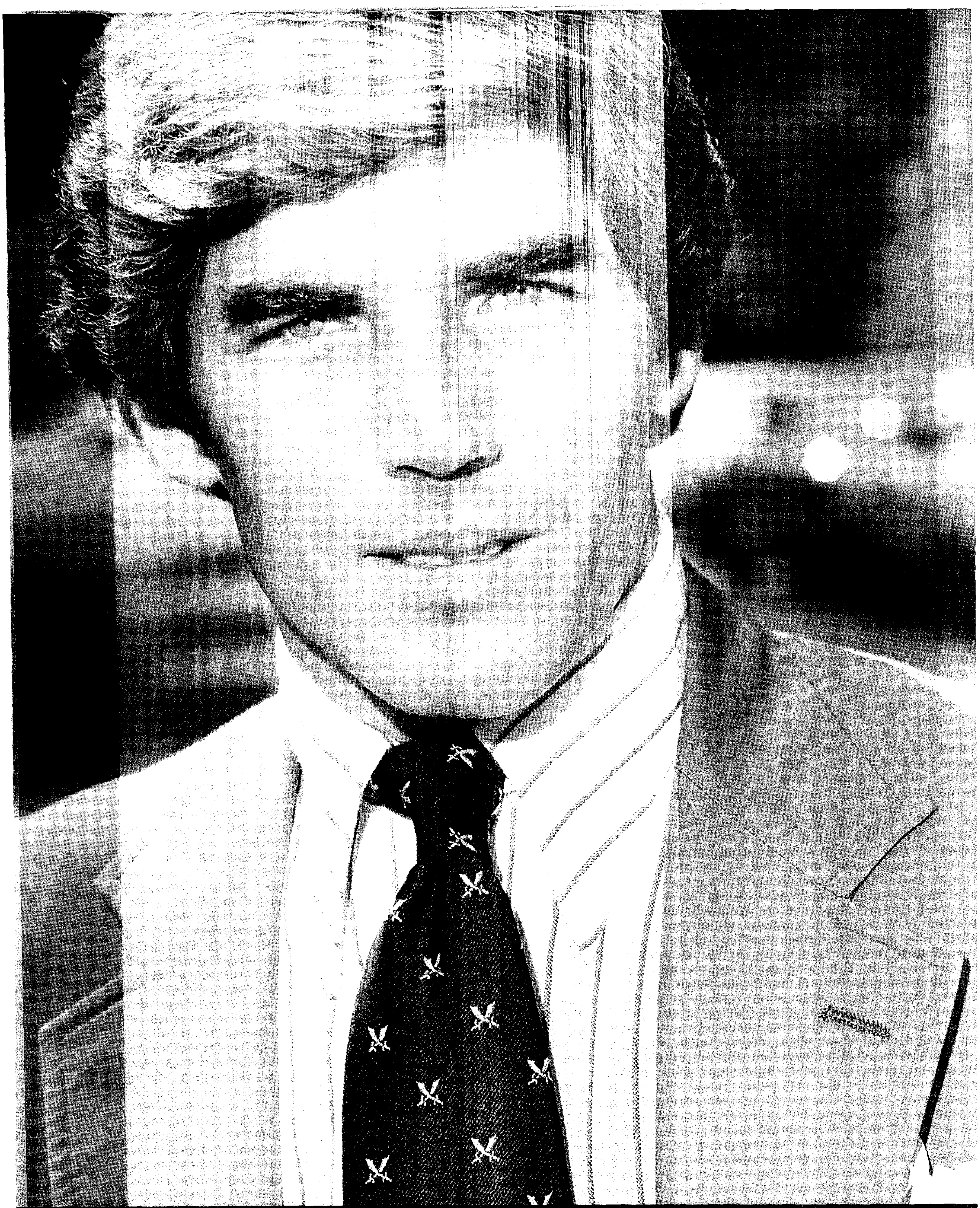
Pastoral Passions

AFTER "Luisa Miller," in 1849, Verdi planned to compose a "King Lear," with Salvatore Cammarano as librettist. It would have to break with "the forms that have been more or less continuously in use up to now," he told Cammarano, and be "treated in an entirely new way, on a large scale, without regard to the *convenienze*" (the standard procedures by which Italian operas were built). Verdi's "King Lear," like Britten's "King Lear" with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau in the title role and Peter Pears as the Fool, was oft dreamed about but never composed. (Aribert Reimann's "Lear," with Fischer-Dieskau in the title role, is billed to open the Munich Festival this summer.) In 1850, Verdi wrote, instead, "Stiffelio," which has just been given what might be called its American full-scale première by the Opera Company of Boston, in the Orpheum. (The small-scale première was presented, not at all ineffectively, by the New York Grand Opera in the Brooklyn Academy of Music in June, 1976.) It was an important production. In the best book so far written about Verdi's music—Volume I of Julian Budden's "The Operas of Verdi" (Volumes II and III have still to appear)—Budden declares that "with all its imperfections, 'Stiffelio' is worthy to stand beside the three masterpieces which it immediately precedes." To range "Stiffelio" beside "Rigoletto," "Il Trovatore," and "La Traviata," those staples of the international repertory, is to place it high. I place it high, too, if not quite as high as that. The imperfections are dramaturgical. Five letters, written, read, or destroyed unread, and one divorce agreement are too many documents for one opera plot. Two of the scenic directions specify "*L'occorrente per iscrivere*" (the requisites for writing). The work opens with the bass reading some theological book, perhaps one written by Stiffelius, and ends with Stiffelius reading from the Bible. A copy of Klopstock's "Messias" plays an important part in the action. Yet all this reading and writing propels a taut and interesting dramatic argument, held to the unities of time and place, and concerned with a Protestant pastor's reluctance to practice what he preaches—to forgive a wife who has committed adultery. It was an unconventional choice of subject for a mid-century Italian opera. Marriage laws, public opinion, and personal morality must have been in Verdi's mind at the time: he had recently returned from Paris to live in his native town with a woman not his wife, who had borne—not to him—at least three illegitimat children. Not only in matter but als in manner he broke with the *convenienze*. Instead of a choral *introduzione*, such as had opened his fourteen previous operas—and was to ope most of the later ones—he began wit a bass arioso, whose grave scoring, harmonic ambiguity (finally resolved in C major, as is the opera itself), and careful matching of vocal register to rhetoric (the line climbs by steps to a climax on E-flat and "Dio") promise work of unusual weight, seriousness and power. The promise is kept. Stiffelius's two interviews with Lina, before and after her guilt is established represent something new in Verdi—the first an aria in which each of Lina' interjections moves Stiffelius's musi onto a new tack, the second a due that is almost another tenor aria in th same "dialectical" style until Lin seizes the initiative and, having failed t soften the jealous husband, addresse herself as a penitent to the priest. Sh does so to a chromatic descending moti over hollow fifths which is derived whether consciously or not, from th melody in the earlier piece to whic Stiffelius owns that forgiveness come easy only to those who have not themselves been injured. The germ of th phrase has already been heard beneat the arioso at the start of the opera. There are other such unifying motifs. Budden drew attention to sequences o lapped fourths which "it is tempting t regard . . . as a Schenkerian *Grundgestalt* standing for the religious element in the opera." The final, radiant, C-major cadence on "perdonata," sung by everyone except Lina, seems to be the declarative resolution of the conditional "perdonata," set to a passing C-minor cadence, that punctuates Lina's *preghiera* in Act I. On all levels—including that important one of having some very attractive tunes—"Stiffelio" is a remarkable work.

The Boston performance, directed and conducted in masterly fashion by Sarah Caldwell, gave musical and dramatic life to the merits revealed in the printed score, and to past perceptions it added new ones. Miss Caldwell has a genius for discovering the essence of a work. Sometimes—not often—her theatrical exuberance carries her away. Sometimes—not often—her confidence that everything will come together on the night proves misplaced. In her approaches to a work, sound preliminary study and inspired last-minute improvisation are blended, and as a result Boston opera performances are usually among the most exciting to be found today. All the big things and most of



"I'm Irving Lasky, once you get to know me."



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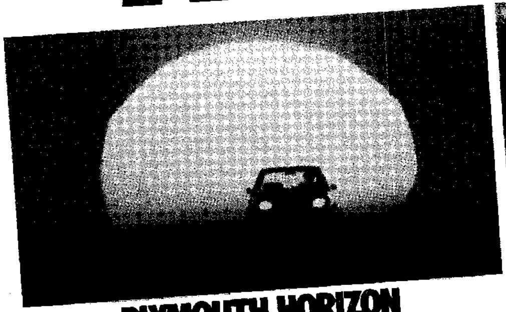

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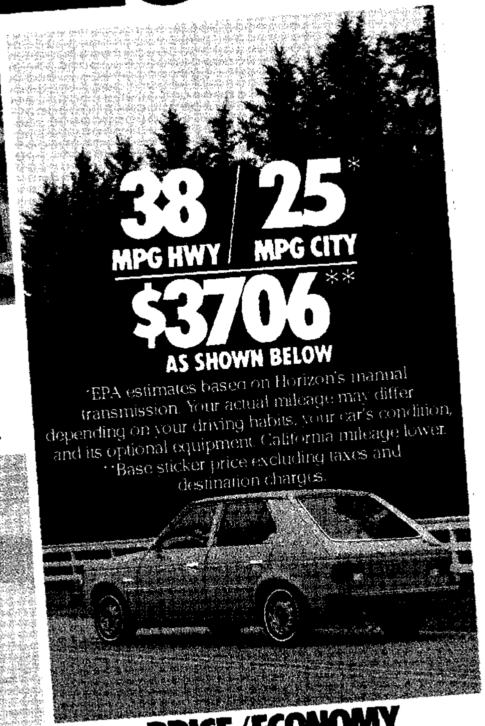

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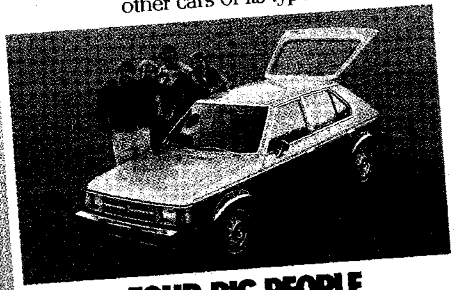

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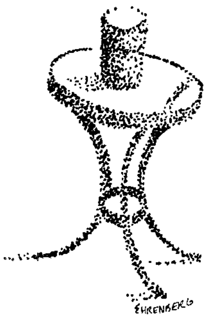
the little things about this "Stiffelio"—I saw the third of four performances—were essentially right. Zack Brown's sets—Salzburg castle, cemetery, church—were handsome, apt in style (the painted backcloth of cypresses against a cloudy night sky matched the romantic musical scene-painting that opens Act II), varied in depth, and cunningly planned to create spaciousness and grandeur on a difficult stage. John Lehmeyer's costumes subtly defined the characters and looked good. The orchestra played with a keen, quick sense of Verdi's expresive colors ("Stiffelio" is the most eloquently scored of the pre-"Rigoletto" operas), and he Orpheum's lack of a unken orchestral pit seemed a positive advantage: the intrumental details told, yet the ingers were not drowned.



The title role is one of ive—from Zamoro in "Alzira," in 1845, to Riccardo in "Un Ballo in Maschera," in 1859—hat Verdi composed for Gaetano Fraschini, his ideal of a tenor; as late s 1871 he wanted him to create Raamès. Fraschini had a ringing, powerul delivery; he was nicknamed the *enore della maledizione*, after the vigr with which as Edgar he used to urse poor Lucy in the second-act finale f Donizetti's opera. Verdi used that maledictory force to great effect in the rst-act and (with exposed octave leaps marked "*con voce terribile*") second-act finales of "Stiffelio." But the role far from being all rant. In this most dventurous opera, Verdi also composed passages that represent his closest pproach to Bellini—not paradoxically, nce Bellini was both the creator of a eroic yet graceful vocal line, charged ith fierce emotions yet strictly conrolled, and a pioneer in the practice of regular forms determined by dramatic ontent. In the accents of Pollio (in Norma"), over the simplest of Belnian accompaniments, Stiffelius adresses Lina in Act III. For the title ole, Miss Caldwell had found a tenor, oelof Oostwoud, with a distinct, well-ormed delivery of both words and mucal phrases. His tones were clean and urely projected, and he was a good ctor. He gave an ardent, satisfying acount of the most arresting tenor charcter Verdi composed before Othello. nna Moffo, Lina at the first two erformances, had retired ill; I heard eigh Munro, who had learned the le in haste yet sang it with complete surance. Her voice is not large nd voluptuous but clear, bright, and true. Lina, like Luisa Miller (the parts were written for the same soprano), needs to be, in Verdi's phrase, "*ingenua ed estremamente drammatica.*" Miss Munro is young, attractive, an excellent actress, and a dramatic interpreter of the music. We will surely be hearing more of her. Count Stankar, Lina's father, was composed for a polished, conventional baritone of the old school, Filippo Colini; for Verdi he had already created Joan of Arc's father. In Donizettian music, Verdi employed Colini's merits and limitations to draw the picture of an old-style aristocrat, but he added an unconventional touch by directing a cabaletta of ferocious, vengeful excitement ("Oh gioia inesprimibile") to be sung "extremely softly throughout, with the exception of the final phrase," a *tutta forza* outburst. Brent Ellis, the Boston Stankar, spoiled the effect by singing the whole movement at a healthy forte. The other characters are subaltern, and were well enough taken.

"Stiffelio" was done in Italian, not English, and it was presumably to provide a visual gloss to words uncomprehended that Miss Caldwell had Stankar publicly stab Lina's seducer in the back: a thing he would never have done—at any rate, not in front of other people. The plain sense of the words (as well as Verdi's stage direction) was contradicted at the final curtain: "Forgiven, the woman [taken in adultery] rose up"—but Lina remained kneeling. Men wearing hats in church looked odd—though I would not put it past Miss Caldwell to have turned up the hat rules of some nineteenth-century Salzburg sect that did wear them except while actually praying. The church scene sported an enthusiastic organist who mimed away like Virgil Fox in full flight even when the organ was not playing. A bad Caldwell idea: the deliberately static, expectant quality of the music—all are waiting to hear on what text Stiffelius will preach—needs to be matched by a motionless scene. A directorial gloss at the very start—family prayers instead of the solitary reader—can be defended: it removed some of the strangeness from Verdi's opening, but at a stroke it introduced anyone who had not read the libretto to a household anxious, for various reasons, about Stiffelius's return. (It was during his absence on a mission that Lina sinned.) In general, the staging was crisp, intelligent, and very musical. The characterizations of major

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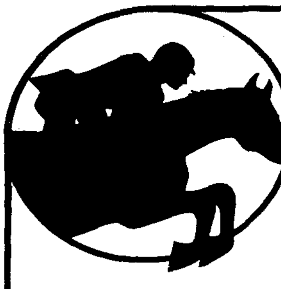

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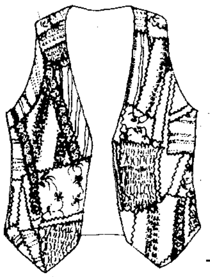

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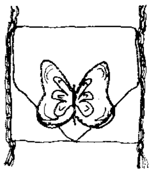

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and minor roles and also of the chorus were sharp, and the complicated ensembles were set out in space so that the right lines came to the fore.

"Stiffelio" had little success in its day. Verdi valued it but realized that the plot was unacceptable to audiences of the time. The modern setting may not have harmed its chances—although "La Traviata," his only other piece with a nineteenth-century action, was often played in eighteenth-century costumes—but the modern subject matter did. Censorship insisted on drawing its teeth. (It was surprising to hear Miss Munro sing one of the censors' silliest changes: at the climax of the duet, "Rodolfo, ascoltatemi" instead of "Ministro, confessatemi." The point is that Stiffelius as minister is bound to listen to the words that as husband he refused to hear.) In 1856, the composer reworked the opera as "Aroldo"—set in Crusader times, in a castle "near Kent," with a new last act beside Loch Lomond—and threw out from the autograph the pages not taken into the revision. "Stiffelio" could not be performed again until a complete orchestral score was traced. It was, ten years ago, and since then the work has had several productions—generally in editions less full and less faithful than that used in Boston. But it deserves wider recognition still. Budden describes the music of the title role as "designed for a man of authority, of religious zeal and blameless moral life . . . a controlled, less vulnerable forerunner of Othello." The right singer for it exists—one with the power, the passion, and the dramatic intensity, a great Samson (Handel's) and a great Othello. Large opera companies are prepared to mount operas "for" Luciano Pavarotti or Placido Domingo. Which of them is going to have the enterprise to let us hear Jon Vickers in "Stiffelio"?

VERDI's "Macbeth," composed in 1846-47 and revised in 1864-65, is an even higher achievement than "Stiffelio," and its merits have been recognized since serious appraisal of Verdi's pre-"Rigoletto" pieces began, in the nineteen-thirties. A recent production by the Baltimore Opera, with Ryan Edwards in the title role, Marisa Galvany as the Lady, and Kenneth Schermerhorn as conductor, was enjoyable. "Macbeth" usually is, and Baltimore productions usually are. The Baltimore Symphony, which accompanies the operas, has admirable players. The chorus is enthusiastic and accomplished, and the audience is enthusiastic, too. The Lyric Theatre, modelled

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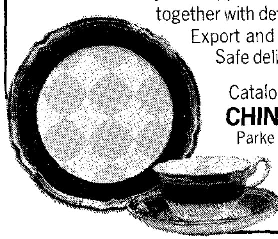

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on the Leipzig Gewandhaus with a stagehouse added, may be too large for all but the largest operas (it seats twenty-five hundred, more than La Scala) and limited in its scenic resources, but it has a good, friendly feel and excellent acoustics. Nevertheless, I feel I must attack this "Macbeth" as being a demonstration of director's folly. It may be unkind to do so—far worse demonstrations appear on international stages, and are acclaimed—but, as Lady Macbeth says in another connection, "*è necessario.*"

David Hicks, who directed, presumably did not begin by asking himself, 'What can I do to make Verdi's music erve my staging, instead of vice versa? How can I convert this hair-raising core into a kind of unnoticed, unemphatic Muzak to accompany stage picures the composer never intended?" But the result looked as if he might have done so, and as if these were some of the answers he found:

Add to the cast the rump-fed ronyon and her husband, the master o' the Tiger, and set them miming and dancing through the witches' first and sec-nd choruses. (From the first, the sec-ion "The weird sisters hand in hand . . thus do go about, about," which Verdi did specify as a round dance, was mitted.) In the Macbeth-Banquo uettino, have Banquo address his sides to the troops. ("The duettino xploits one of the few dramatic ad-antages that opera possesses over a poken play—its ability to present simultaneously the emotional content of wo consecutive and contrasted speech-s, each delivered as a soliloquy."—Budden.) Do not allow Macbeth to onjure up the image of a spectral agger through vivid acting and singing; project a poster-size painting of dagger on the front gauze. Later, where Verdi was insistent that the nger of Banquo should also impersonate Banquo's ghost, seated at the anquet, replace him with another ront-gauze projection. Make the first-ct finale, that depiction of "*stupore niversale,*" into the accompaniment o tableaux of actions around a blood-olter'd Duncan, plonked down center stage. Let Banquo and Fleance t down comfortably before Banquo ngs "Watch your step, O my son." Masterstroke: Destroy the impact of he sleepwalking scene by placing the octor and the waiting gentlewoman enter stage in a pool of light while Lady Macbeth crouches down in shad-ws at the side to sing. Get Macbeth to lay the scena before his aria "Honor, ove, obedience, troops of friends I

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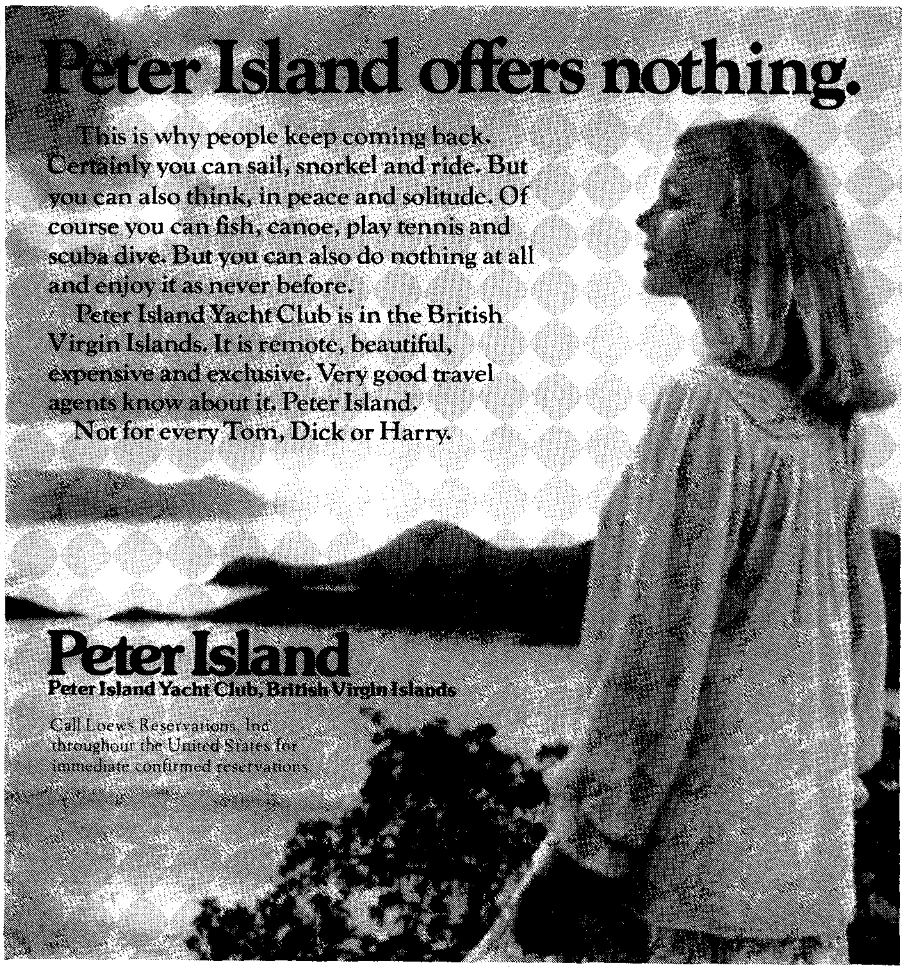

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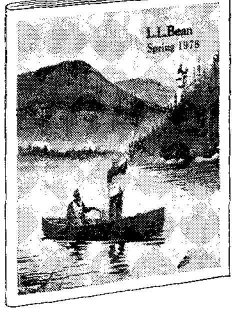

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must not look to have" as a drunk scene, lurching and reeling about.

Such things bewilder me. What is the point of making changes that are not improvements? A conductor does not say, "Let's have that clarinet solo played on a flute; let's reharmonize that passage; let's substitute for those measures these more piquant ones of my own composition." (Well, some conductors have done so, and have been trounced therefor. Mr. Schermerhorn won my admiration for striking out a few conductors' tamperings with Verdi's score—harp additions to the prelude and the sleepwalking scene—which have found their way into the standard Ricordi material; in recent recordings, Claudio Abbado and Riccardo Muti retain them.) Changes *can* be improvements. Sarah Caldwell once added, in spoken dialogue, so felicitous a final twist to the plot of Donizetti's "La Fille du Régiment" that it seemed inadvertent of the original librettists not to have included it. But none of Mr. Hicks's additions or changes to "Macbeth" convinced me that he was a better musical dramatist than Verdi.

In 1848, when Naples was planning to mount "Macbeth" with Eugenia Tadolini as the prima donna, Verdi wrote a letter to Cammarano which has often been quoted:

> You know how much I esteem Tadolini, and she herself knows it; but in the general interest I feel I should set some observations before you. Tadolini's qualities are too great for that role! Perhaps that seems to you an absurd thing to say!! Tadolini has a beautiful and benign face, and I want Lady Macbeth to be ugly and evil. Tadolini sings to perfection, and I want a Lady Macbeth who doesn't sing. Tadolini has a marvellous voice, clear, limpid, and strong, and I want the Lady's voice to be harsh, stifled, and hollow. Tadolini's voice has an angelic quality; I want the Lady's voice to have a demonic quality.

How much bad singing has been defended by those words! In the general interest, I feel I should set out two further observations. First, while there is obviously *some* accuracy in his catalogue of vocal vices needed by the Lady, in context the composer's letter reads as an argument *ad feminam*—courteous exaggerations employed as a face-saving way of saying, "For heaven's sake, don't use Tadolini. She'll be no good in the part." Tadolini, though only about forty, was nearing the end of her career; she had made her name in Donizetti; she was still a Neapolitan favorite. Verdi's letter was meant to be shown around; in fact, it continues, "Submit these considerations to the management, to Maestro Mer-

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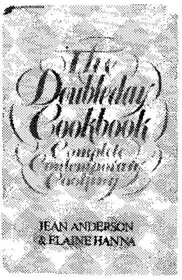

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cadante, who will be the first to approve these ideas of mine, to Tadolini herself, and do what in your wisdom you think best." (In the event, Tadolini did sing the role, both that season and the next.) Second, "marvellous" Tadolini voices, clear, limpid, and strong, are not common today, and few sopranos need strive when tackling the Lady's difficult music to achieve harshness and devilish discolorations; they can be left to come of themselves. Montserrat Caballé apart, is there any dramatic soprano—or mezzo—around who *could* sing the role too beautifully?

Miss Galvany let fly too wildly at the top, and she carried chest tone up into the middle range in an overexuberant way. There was a certain coarseness in much of her vocalism which need not have been there, for in the sleepwalking scene she showed that she can be precise and delicate when she chooses. I should like to hear her in a performance in which her first care was to sing the music as truly as possible; given her abundantly dramatic temperament—and the way the role is written—it would be unlikely to be tame. Both she and Mr. Edwards tended to sing out, even to splurge, in passages where they should have concentrated on an almost whispered, very soft yet intense projection of the words. To Felice Varesi, the first Macbeth, Verdi wrote, "I'll never stop telling you to study the words and the dramatic situation; then the music will come right of its own accord." The first duet for the pair is marked to be sung "*sotto voce*, dark and hollow throughout, except for the phrases where 'in full, broad voice' is indicated." The core of the second is marked "*pppp*, with the voice held back." Limpid vocalism à la Tadolini is wrong; so is any crude, loud barking or roaring.

The revised edition of 1865, abridged by several cuts, was used, but Macbeth's final monologue from 1847, "Mal per me," was included. It is better followed by the brief 1847 acclamation of Malcolm than—as in Baltimore—by the 1865 victory hymn. Ara Berberian was the Banquo, rather humbly in tone. Moises Parker was the Macduff; he has a big voice but no stage presence. —ANDREW PORTER

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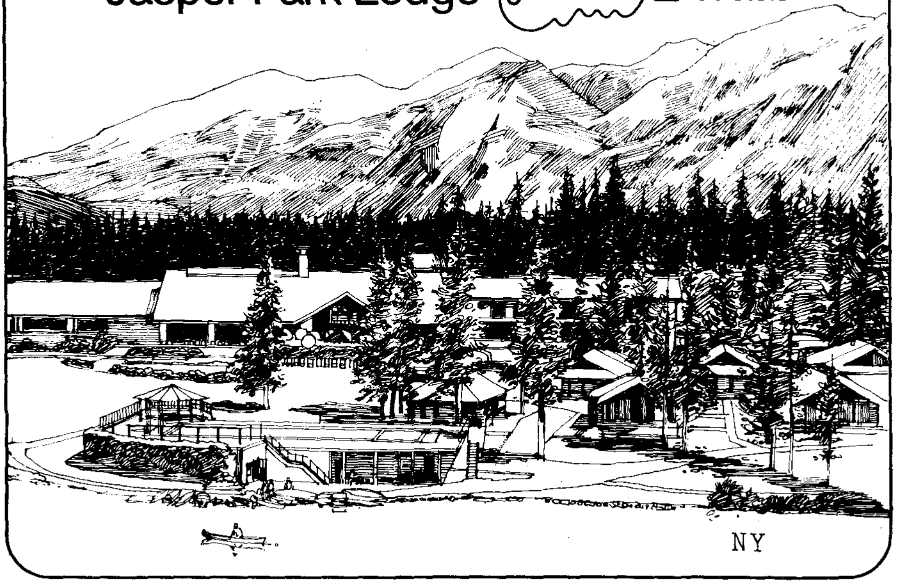

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BOOKS

Murder Will Out

AT approximately four-thirty on the afternoon of April 26, 1937, a small flight of Italian planes appeared over the Basque town of Guernica. They were followed by successive waves of German planes belonging to the Condor Legion, Luftwaffe "volunteers" sent by Nazi Germany to assist Franco's armies. These waves, each made up of some fifteen to twenty bombers and fighters, included Heinkel 111s and Junkers 52s for bombing and Heinkel 51s for pursuit and machine-gunning. Bombing and strafing went on for more than three hours. Driven by strong winds, the flames turned Guernica into an inferno. Fugitives able to reach open country were gunned down from the air. Estimates of casualties vary: the most plausible put the dead at sixteen hundred, and the wounded at between eight and nine hundred. By noon on April 29th, the first Nationalist troops entered the smoldering ruins.

The destruction at Guernica, an open town nine miles behind the front, was witnessed not only by the victims but by two superbly accurate and responsible observers. George Lowther Steer's report appeared in the *Times* of London, his home paper, and in the New York *Times* on April 28th. His account remains a classic of reporting:

> The whole town of 7000 inhabitants, plus 3000 refugees, was slowly and systematically pounded to pieces. Over a radius of five miles round a detail of the raiders' technique was to bomb separate *caseríos*, or farmhouses. In the night these burned like little candles in the hills....
>
> The tactics of the bombers, which may be of interest to students of the new military science, were as follows: First, small parties of airplanes threw heavy bombs and hand grenades all over the town, choosing area after area in orderly fashion. Next came fighting machines which swooped low to machine-gun those who ran in panic from dugouts, some of which had already been penetrated by 1000 lb. bombs, which make a hole 25 ft. deep. Many of these people were killed as they ran. A large herd of sheep being brought in to the market was also wiped out. The object of this move was apparently to drive the population underground again, for next as many as 12 bombers appeared at a time dropping heavy and incendiary bombs upon the ruins. The rhythm of this bombing of an open town was, therefore, a logical one: first, hand grenades and heavy bombs to stampede the population, then machine-gunning to drive them below, next heavy and incendiary bombs to wreck the houses and burn them on top of their victims.

The second preëminent witness was Father Alberto de Onaindia, a canon in the cathedral of Valladolid, on his way through the Basque country to take his mother and other members of his family from the danger zone. He reached Guernica just as the onslaught began:

> Through the streets wandered the animals brought to market, donkeys, pigs, chickens. In the midst of that conflagration we saw people who fled screaming, praying, or gesticulating against the attackers.... All the gutters and ditches were filled with people who wanted to hide or find protection against the cowardly attack of the enemy air force....
>
> Guernica was burning. We did not perceive many flames during the first two hours because it was day and the smoke was hiding the fires. But when we wished to penetrate into the town, we could not take many steps without feeling ourselves choked by the smoke and the flames which were beginning to consume all the dwellings.

One would think that the facts of so hideous, public, and closely witnessed an event would have been established. But this was not to be. Controversy over just what took place in the skies above, and in the streets of, Guernica on that "radiant" April afternoon and evening (the adjective is Father Onaindia's) persisted from the moment of the attack almost until today. It ranged from blanket denials that Guernica was ever bombed to intricate qualifications and apologetics aimed at putting the event in an entirely different light. How can this be? How can doubt or lies demean even massacre, and seek to bury the dead twice over in oblivi-

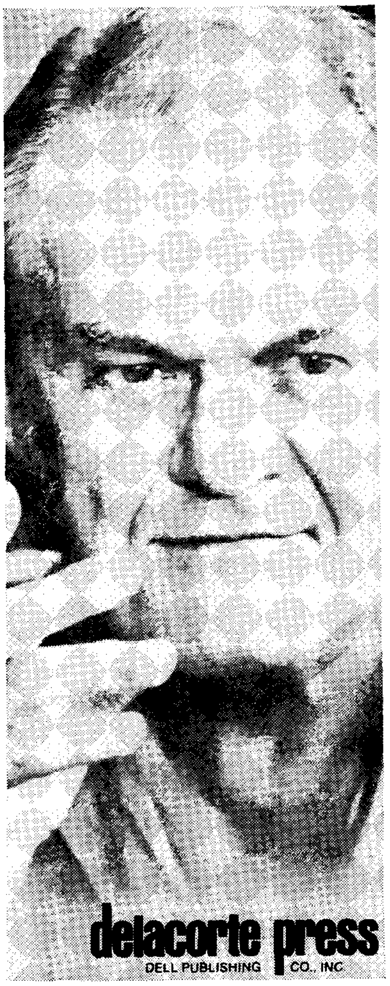
"She's all work and no play."

on? Herbert Rutledge Southworth's "Guernica! Guernica!" (University of California Press; $19.95) is a fascinating, profoundly depressing attempt to answer this question.

Though caught momentarily off-guard by the vehemence of international indignation—indignation emanating from Steer's graphic testimony—the Nationalist press bureau in Salamanca entered quickly into action. By April 27th, the day after the raid, Nationalist spokesmen were brand-ng as lies the desperate outcry and ummons for help which came from José Antonio de Aguirre, President of he autonomous Basque government. Thus, even as Steer's report reached English and American readers, a ma-hinery of falsehood which was to grind ıway for almost forty years had been et in motion. The first line of mendac-ty was absolute. There had never een a raid on Guernica. The town ıad been destroyed by incendiarism rom the ground. Knowing that their nilitary position was crumbling, intent n arousing desperate resistance against he advancing army of General Mola, alculating shrewdly on international ympathy, the motley pack of "Reds," ınarchists, and Basque nationalists had et Guernica to the torch. There were ıt least three lines of "evidence" to upport this contention. Bad weather ıad grounded Nationalist planes on the elevant day, but a reconnaissance plane hat had happened to be over the area wo days later had reported seeing moke and fires in a gutted, but not ombed, town. Almost immediately fter the Nationalist occupation of what vas left of Guernica, Spanish and for-ign "experts" were brought in to tes-ify that the nature of the damage was ncompatible with aerial bombardment: here were no bomb craters, and the xact configuration of the charred and ollapsed buildings showed that they ıad been fired from the ground up-vard. The third line of "proof" was y analogy: had not Irún and Eibar, wo other Basque towns, been set light by retreating Republican units hortly before the alleged raid on Guernica? (The Republicans them-elves had never denied that their re-reating troops burned Irún; the case f Eibar remains unclear.) By April 28th, Franco's headquarters could an-ıounce:

> The slanderous maneuvers of the Basco-Soviet leaders, who, after destroy-ng their best cities by fire, attempt to lame the National air force for these cts of barbarism, have provoked a oundless indignation among the Na-ional troops.... This falsehood coin-ides with the fact that the National air

Ole Brask



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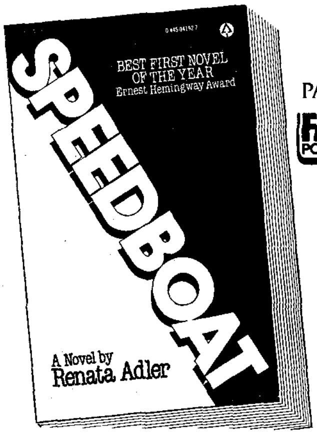

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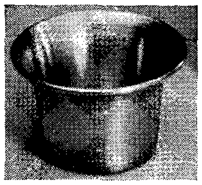

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force has been unable to fly during these last few days because of the fog and drizzle everywhere.

A further pronouncement followed at two in the morning on the twenty-ninth: "Guernica was destroyed by fire and gasoline. It was set on fire and converted into ruins by the Red hordes at the criminal service of Aguirre." As contradictions emerged in this version of the facts, a certain qualification was introduced. Far from being an open town, Guernica had actually been a site of Republican arms manufacture, and a few bombs might have been directed at a factory on the outskirts and at a strategic bridge leading out of the town. But the damage caused by these had been legitimate and minor. Seeing their chance, the "Red hordes" had gone to work. Give or take an occasional detail, this explanation of the ruin of Guernica became official Spanish history. Until 1967, for a Spaniard to question it in any way was tantamount to treason.

But it is not this internal lie that most exercises Mr. Southworth. It is the support and elaboration given to this lie by journalists, historians, and politicians in other lands, beyond the reach of Franco's security police and state censorship. It is the mechanics of corruption, self-deception, and cowardice which impelled French, British, and American newspapermen, pundits, and information agencies to propagate the Fascist line and to attempt to discredit the integrity of Steer's report. Pursuing every falsehood to the point of implacable minutiae, Mr. Southworth has written an invaluable footnote to the general history of tawdriness and failure of nerve in the non-Fascist West in the late nineteen-thirties. Each lie has its own ideological and circumstantial roots; the aggregate of untruth makes a sickening dossier.

Like the Dreyfus affair, the Spanish Civil War exposed fundamental lesions and antagonisms in French society and politics. Even French Socialists and left-wing liberals were afraid of challenging the mounting tide of Fascist and Nazi power. Insofar as Italian and German intervention was at issue, Guernica posed a spiky dilemma. To the vociferous right wing in French politics, the whole incident could be read either as a proof of Fascist invincibility or as yet another example of Red atrocities. Was it not patent that those who exclaimed loudest in outrage—the dauber Picasso, the rhymester Éluard—were Communists or shameless fellow-travellers? Internally divided, mined by appeasement in foreign policy and by threats of a Popular Front at home, the Quai d'Orsay, which by May 5th was fully aware of the facts, played an ambiguous and, finally, a dishonest role. It labored to delay publication of eyewitness reports and did much to suggest that the Nationalist version might be the true one. Mr. Southworth shows in exact detail how this attitude was brought to bear on the French press agency Havas and its correspondents in the field.

In Britain also, Francoist lies found ready hearing and substantiation. Eden, who had little doubt as to what had happened at Guernica, adopted the pose of "trying to establish the facts." As he stated in Parliament on July 12th, "no British official was present at Guernica at the time of its destruction." But even such evasions did not satisfy the strong pro-Franco lobby in the British press and in conservative political and social quarters. The Catholic hierarchy, certain aristocrats with old ties to their Hispanic friends, and a pack of journalists, Catholics prominent among them, took up enthusiastically the myth of Republican incendiarism. Wing Commander (later Air Vice Marshal) Archibald H. W. James assured the House of Commons that he had visited the ruins and seen that "almost the whole of the destruction was done by simultaneous incendiarism from inside."

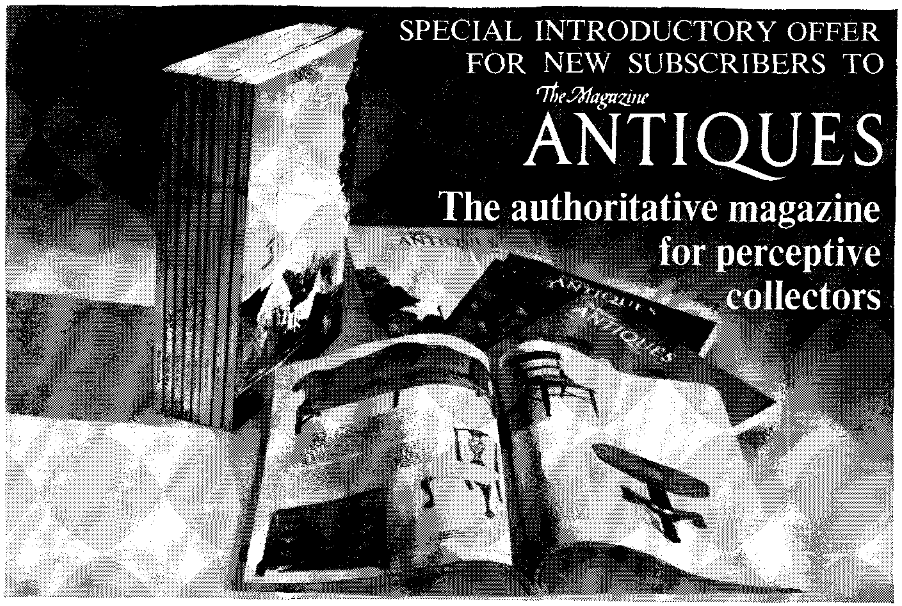
Washington comes out rather better. On May 6th, Senator Borah, of Idaho, spoke on the floor of the Senate. Every word he said will stand:

> No language can describe the scene at Guernica, and Guernica was not a single instance; it was simply a culmination of a long line of unspeakable atrocities. It was not a military maneuver... An unarmed, non-combatant city was singled out for the most revolting instance of mass murder in modern times. It was Fascist strategy.

There is one psychological factor that Mr. Southworth may be underestimating in his relentless diagnosis of the lies and cowardice of politicians, press, and manipulated opinion. The enormity of Guernica was novel. It caught the imagination unprepared. The limits of credible inhumanity were nursery-style compared to what they are now. Warsaw, Coventry, Dresden, Hiroshima, the fire storms over Southeast Asia still lay ahead. Given the fact that the famous Belgian atrocity stories of 1914 had turned out to be fabrications, a fair measure of skepticism was still at work. An exactly comparable mechanism has been traced with regard to the nonbelief that met the first waves of news, and even pictures, from the Nazi concentration camps. We have finally come of age: today it is scarcely possible to imagine a bestiality we would not believe, package in the media, and digest.

With the systematic disclosure of German military archives and the gradual liberalization of the Franco regime, murder was allowed out. Slowly, with a cunning aura of ambiguity. But out, nevertheless. After 1967, even Spaniards were permitted to know that Guernica had been pulverized from the air. But this act of terror had been carried out by the Condor Legion on its own initiative. When the Caudillo found out, he was bitterly incensed. Ah, those nasty Germans. Today, even after Mr. Southworth's exhaustive indictment and such lucid general treatments as that of Hugh Thomas in his definitive book, "The Spanish Civil War," a few areas of uncertainty do remain. Nationalist involvement in the air strike is very nearly certain. But its precise weight and the degree to which Mola and Franco may have realized what was to be done cannot be rigorously determined. Nor is there any absolute proof of the motives that led von Richthofen's fliers to choose Guernica in the first place and to level it in the second. "I do not know," says Mr. Southworth, but he suggests that the most plausible reason was one of technical trial. Both Mussolini and Hitler were anxious to know how ruinous aerial bombardment could be, and whether the right mix of bombers and pursuit planes could reduce an urban population to panic. The hatred of their Nationalist hosts for the Basque independence movement made Guernica a handy, psychologically safe target. Guernica was a rehearsal.

The truth is a harsh, ironic muse, even toward those who, like H. R. Southworth, would serve her best. "The Spanish Civil War was fought so that the possessing class in Spain, those who owned the land, the factories, and the banks could keep their holdings," he writes. This is exactly the simplistic sort of idiom and pseudo-profundity put forward by those whom Mr. Southworth would expose. The Spanish Civil War was an immensely complicated mess, in which motives and fluctuations of attitude were nearly as numerous as atrocities. And the atrocities were far from being unilateral. If Nationalist warfare was a rehearsal for Fascist and Nazi tactics, certain aspects of Republican policy both at the



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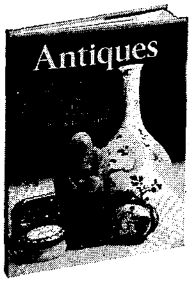

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front and behind the front turned into a hideous practice ground for Stalinism. And when Orwell and Borkenau—neither of whom merits even a mention in Mr. Southworth's immensely compendious work—sought to say so, the left-wing and liberal press to which Mr. Southworth turns when seeking to establish the facts about Guernica would not print their dispatches. Moreover, if it is perfectly true that the Nationalists hated and oppressed the Basques, such loathing was returned. Today, when Guernica itself has been rebuilt and many of its twenty thousand inhabitants cross and recross the famous bridge that every bomb missed, Spain is toiling to emerge from a long nightmare. But the Basque militants, in the name of symbols and values that Mr. Southworth extolls, are bombing and murdering. One may view their cause as a legitimate drive for autonomy or as a tragic anachronism in a Europe that is trying to overcome ethnic and regional divisions. What is undeniable is the sterile ferocity of the deeds.

"Guernica! Guernica!" is a distinguished book. Had the author clung more fiercely to his own ideal of dispassion, it could have been a great one.

—GEORGE STEINER

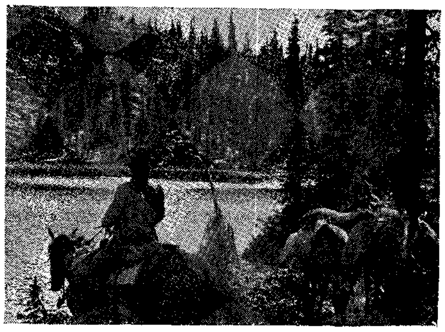
BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

SUMMER VISITS, by Margery Sharp (Little, Brown; $8.95). The century-long comings and goings of the inhabitants of Cotton Hall, a much renovated East Anglian mansion, half-rectory, half-manor, which was bought in the eighteen-fifties by John Henry Braithwaite, a crusty old Lancashireman. Too much happens in this smoothly written book to swallow all at once (it reads as if it had been destined to be split up into segments for a BBC series), but taken in small doses, it provides some wickedly enjoyable portraits of profligate sons; a plump, goodhearted servant girl who becomes mistress of the hall; several ambitious children; and not a small number of rogues and adventurers. Miss Sharp's English men and women are almost always self-deluded and somewhat absurd, but their bumblings reveal a surprisingly large amount about the innards of British society.

GENERAL

A YOUNG MAN IN SEARCH OF LOVE, by Isaac Bashevis Singer, with



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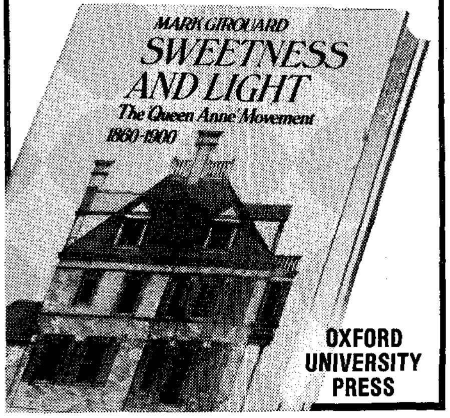

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drawings and paintings by Raphael Soyer (Doubleday; $12.95). The youthful yearnings and pessimism of Isaac Bashevis Singer—rabbi's son, dishevelled skeptic, redhead, fledgling writer, impecunious room lodger, Warsaw Writers Club habitué, reluctant candidate for the Polish draft (he was eventually turned down because of bad lungs), lover of a sickly older woman (and a sturdy chambermaid and a literary bohemian), and passionate seeker for "some means with which to penetrate the barrier of the categories of pure reason." Mr. Singer's memoir is in part a continuation of his earlier volume "A Little Boy in Search of God," but it is also, as he puts it, "a story in itself—a story of the never-ceasing search and gain of love . . . a kind of spiritual autobiography." Among the fringe benefits one receives while enjoying the rich past of this unfailingly robust spirit are glimpses of the pre-Second World War Polish-Jewish literati (heavy battles between Stalinists and Trotskyites), a peek at the loutish anti-Semitism of the Polish Army, and a privileged look at the first glimmerings of what might crudely be called the generation gap between pious old Jewish parents and their emancipated children. Raphael Soyer's lush, sympathetic drawings and paintings perfectly complement the wonderful text.

Eastward Ha!, by S. J. Perelman (Simon & Schuster; $7.95). Mr. Perelman's boiling point has, if anything, lowered with the years, and the vapor when he is at his best—when circumstances become insupportable, that is—is pure laughter. This book, a report on a catch-as-catch-can pilgrimage to various spots around the world, is part fact and part invention in a blend that is all his own. He is at his volatile best in the Highlands of Scotland, Tel Aviv, and Hollywood, Cal.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

Death of an Expert Witness, by P. D. James (Scribners; $8.95). Miss James' work as a practitioner of the classic English mystery novel is often favorably compared to that of Dorothy Sayers and Margery Allingham and the other female pioneers of the genre. The truth—as this new novel (her seventh) clearly demonstrates—is that she is their superior in almost every respect: a better, more sensitive writer, a more agile and teasing storyteller, a deep-

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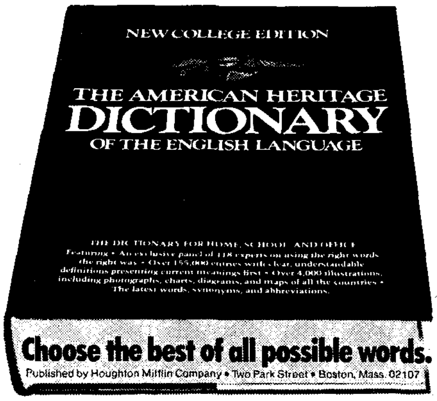

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er, more clear-eyed observer of human nature, human fears, human drives and aspirations. The story she tells us here has to do with an interesting (and expertly depicted) closed community—a forensic-science laboratory in a small East Anglia village. One of the senior biologists is found murdered in his triple-locked and delicately alarm-wired office, and Commander Adam Dalgliesh, of Scotland Yard—one of Miss James' most attractive creations and a fictional detective blessedly free of gimmicky mannerisms—is assigned to the case. His conduct of it is, as usual, flawless.

Sabine, by Nicolas Freeling (Harper & Row; $7.95). Inspector Castang, of the French Police Judiciaire, is dispatched to a small provincial town to investigate the murder (a blow on the head) of an elderly landed widow, whose only relatives are an adopted son and his wife, with whom she lived in neighborly semi-estrangement. The local police suggest hopefully that the woman was the victim of some wandering gypsy or hippie or vandal—anything not to ruffle the calm of the community. Castang (like all Mr. Freeling's detectives) is a version of Inspector Maigret, and he handles the case in the established manner of his progenitor—eating, drinking, dreaming, brooding, plodding. The pleasure here, as in so much of the Maigret saga, lies largely in the atmosphere of the town, the glimpsed narrow lives of its inhabitants, and the attractive personality of Castang. One problem is the Englishness of many of Mr. Freeling's French provincials: "A bit daft," "Fellow's done a bunk," "Fancy a drink?" It makes one think of the early English translations of Tolstoy, with the serfs saying "Gorblimey."

•

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OF 1978
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A Boy
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$50.00 has been placed
in a bank account for Shirley
at the
Canadian Imperial Bank
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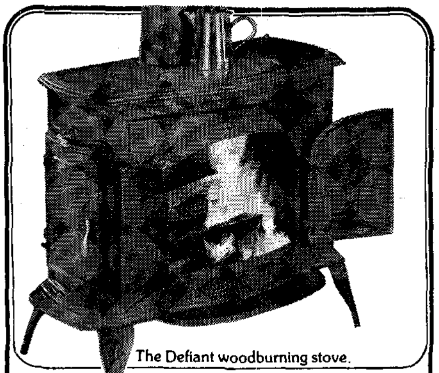
—*Adv. in the Yellowknife (Northwest Territories) News of the North.*

We love you anyway, Sean David!



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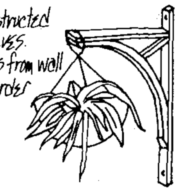

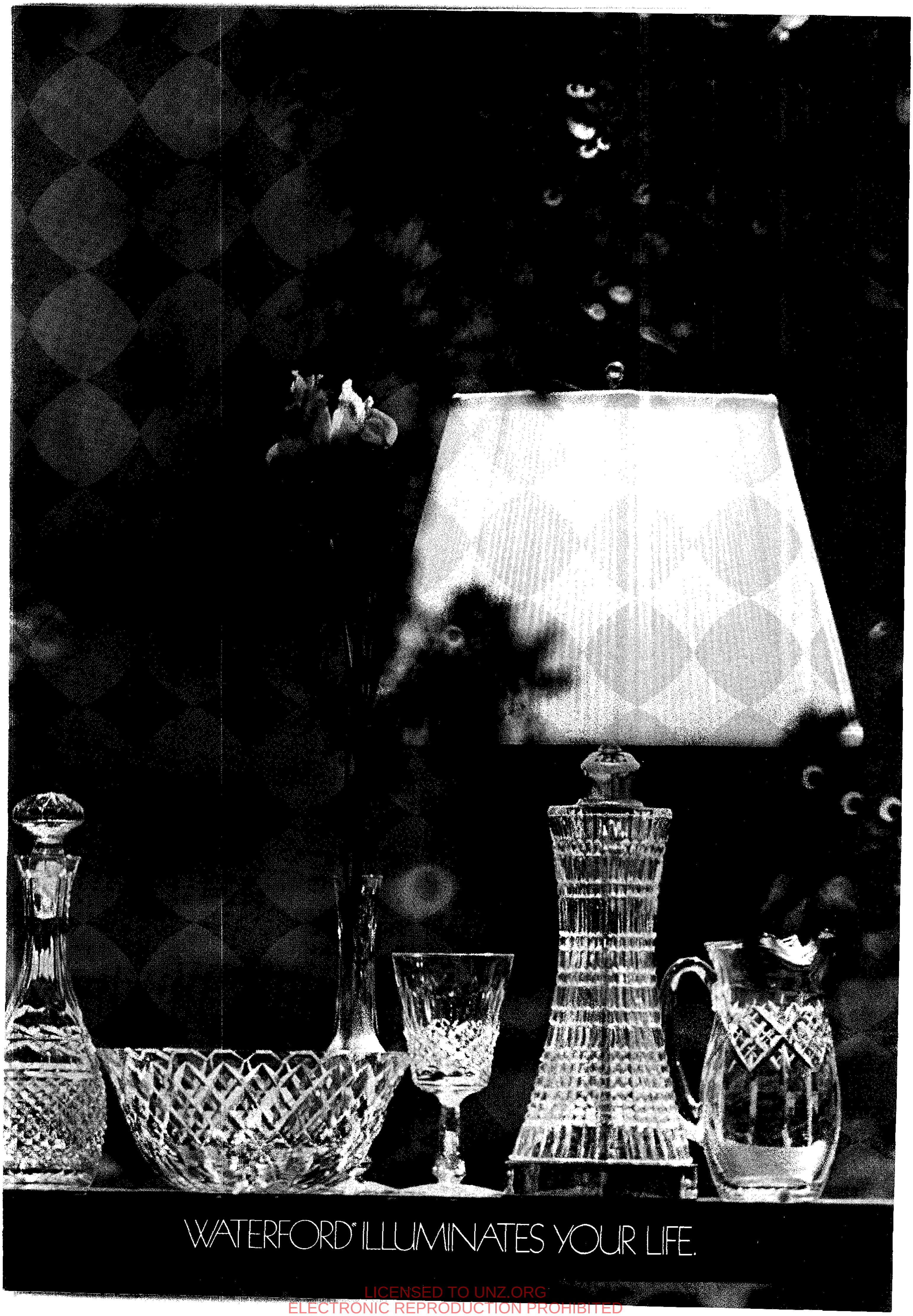
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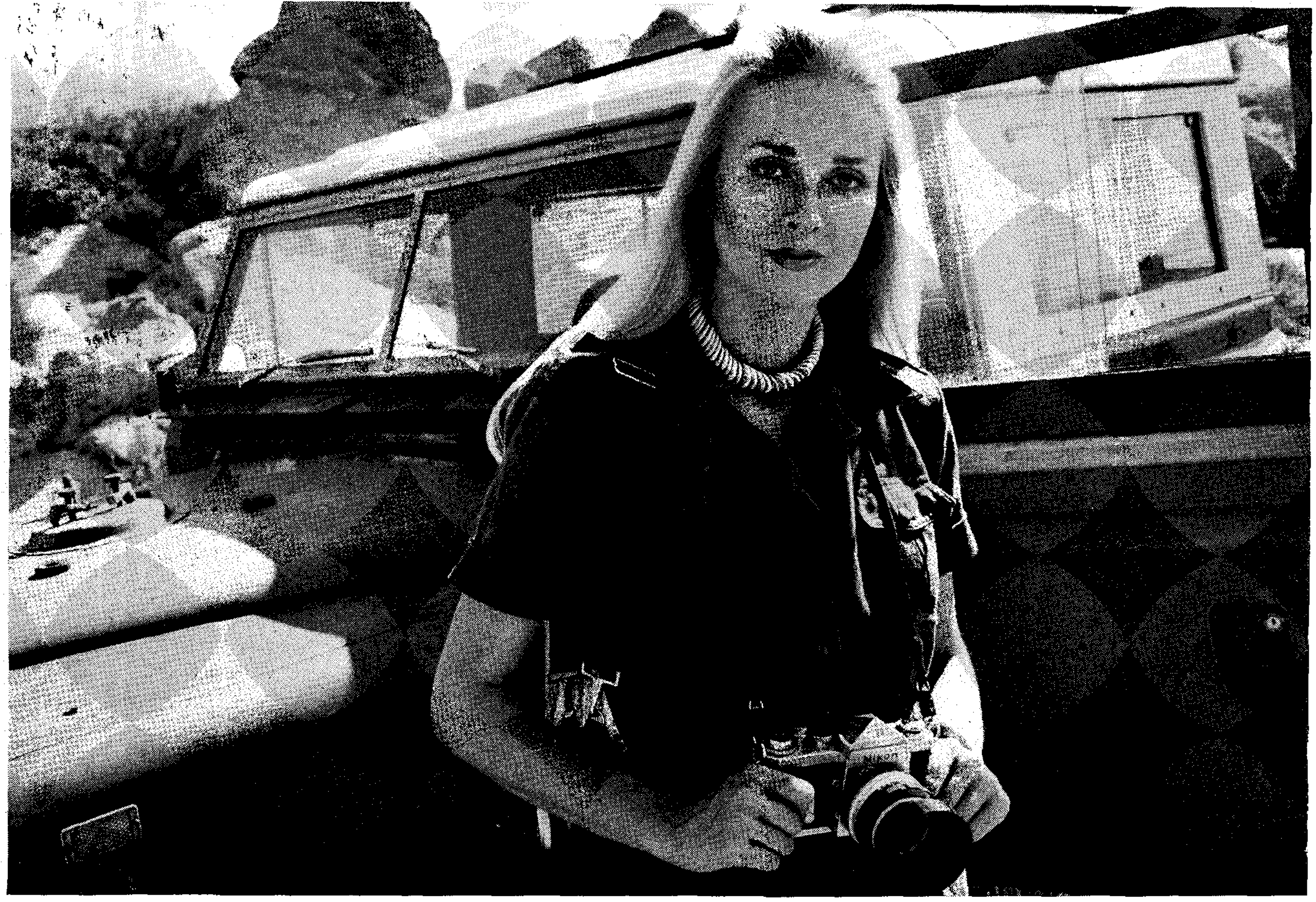

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SUE HOULE

HOME: Los Angeles, California

AGE: 36

PROFESSION: Photographer

HOBBIES: Archaeology, anthropology.

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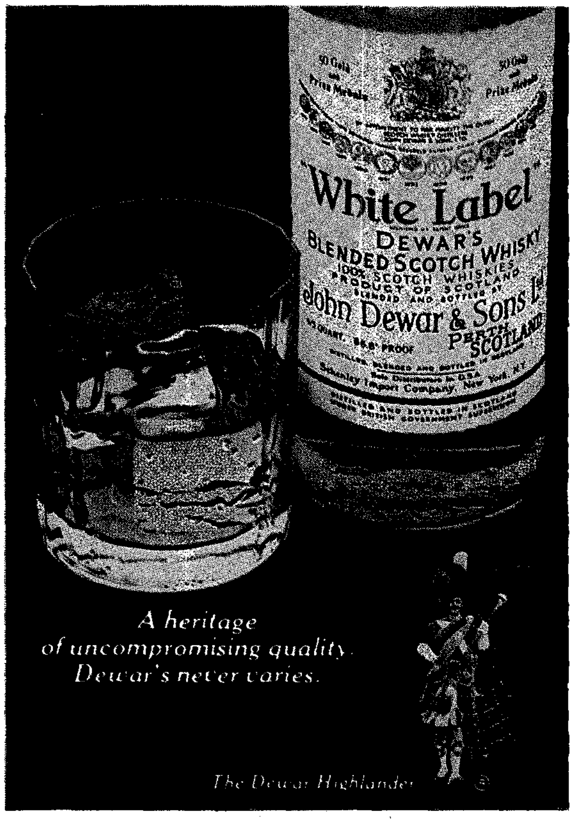
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